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AN INTERNATIONAL PALESTINIAN MONTHLY MAGAZINE

THE RETURN

FATAH CONGRESS CALLS FOR ESCALATING THE INTIFADAH

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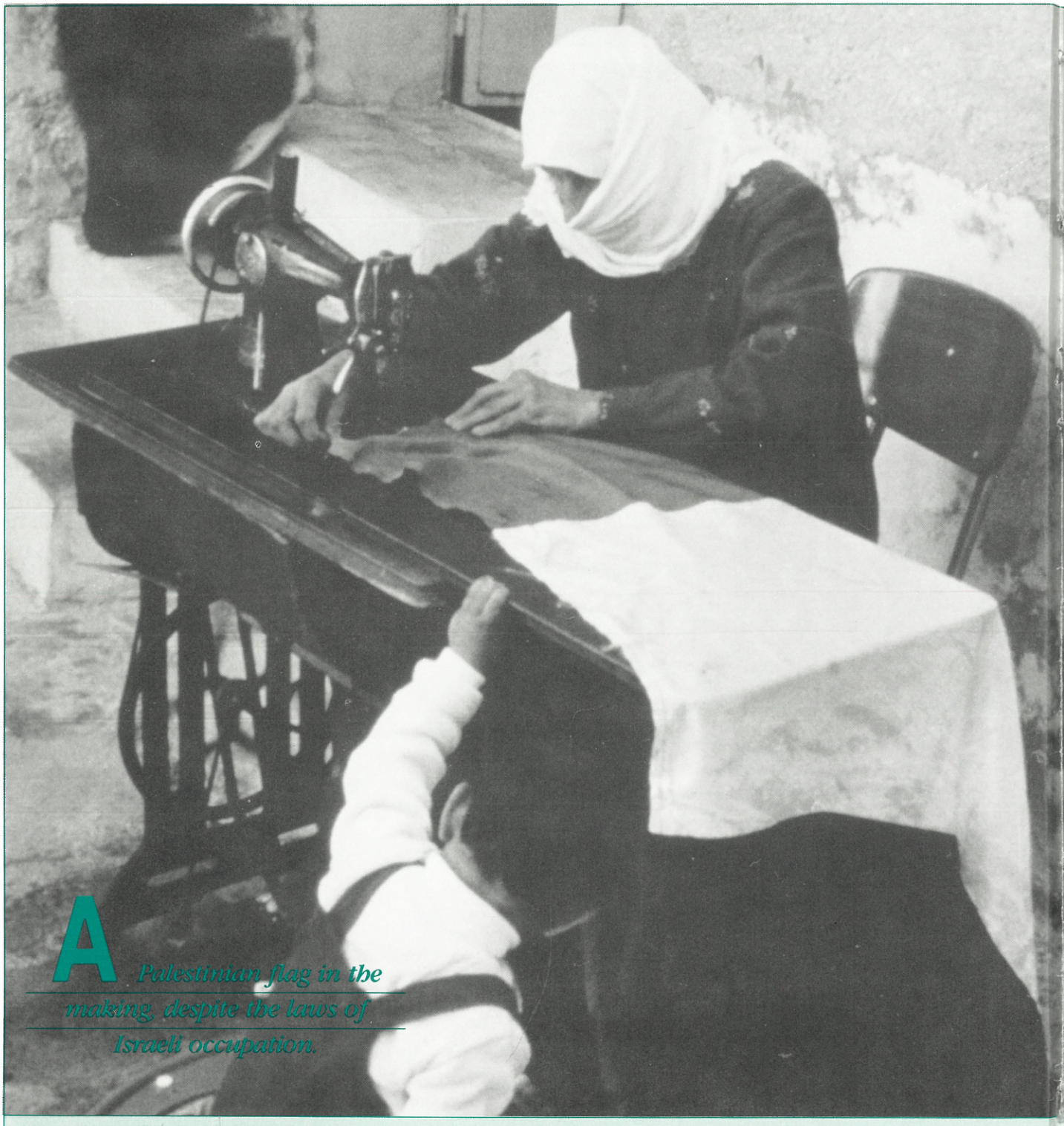
**Israel Violates U.S. Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986:
Ties with South Africa are Thriving**
by Jane Hunter

Full Text of Fatah Communiqué



A Palestinian flag in the making, despite the laws of Israeli occupation.

photo by A. Keller - S. Binovic

THE RETURN

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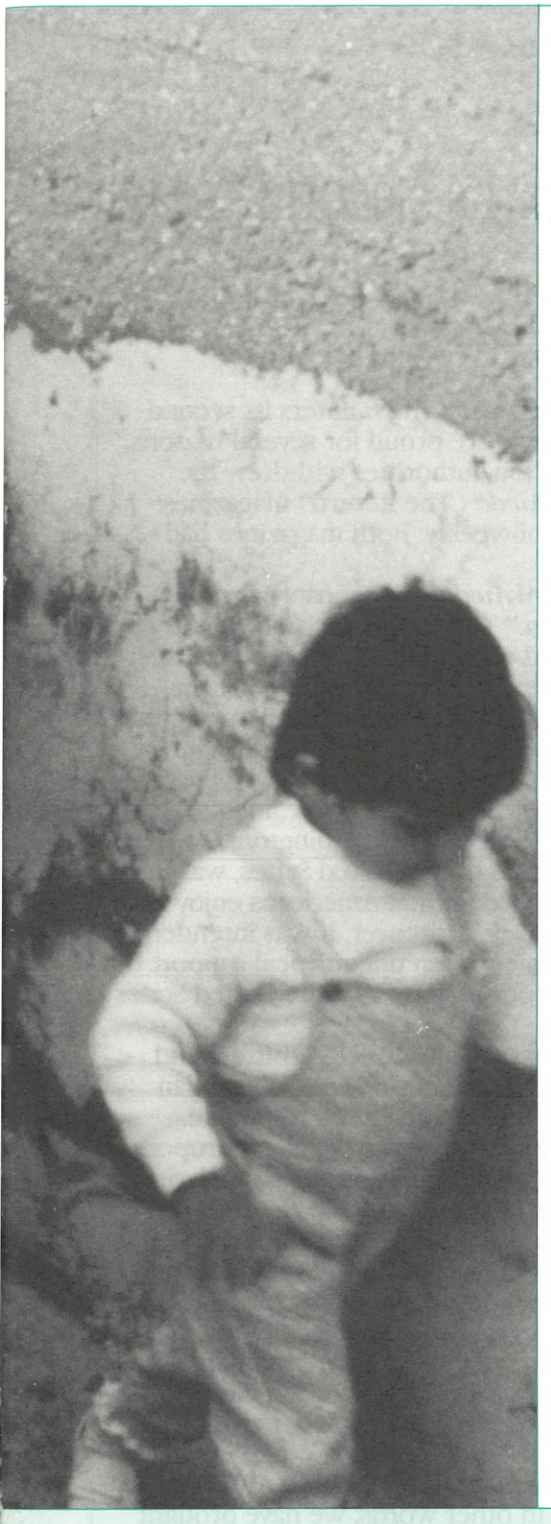

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Cover Photo: Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and Tunisian President Zein Al-Abideen at the opening session of the Fifth Fatah Congress. Photo by Al-Rawass

THE RETURN is an international Palestinian monthly magazine. It is published in Washington, D.C., by *The Jerusalem Press Service*. The cover price is U.S. $4.00. Subscriptions are $24.00 per year. For additional savings, see advertisement on the back cover of this magazine.

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The Return Enters Its Second Year: A Kept Promise

With the publication of this issue, ***The Return*** enters its second year. It is an achievement of which we are proud for several reasons.

On May 2, 1988, Israeli occupation authorities withdrew the licenses of the Jerusalem-based *Al-Awda* (The Return) magazines: the English weekly and the Arabic bi-weekly. Both magazines had been published since 1982.

Israeli authorities claimed that *Al-Awda* was sponsored and financed by a "terrorist organization." The Israeli decision to withdraw the needed licenses was based on Article 94 (2) of the British Mandatory Laws of 1945, which were in force during the British Mandate of Palestine, and which Israel has conveniently resurrected to suppress the Palestinian people's freedom of speech under its occupation.

With no time wasted, the publisher of the magazine, made the necessary arrangements to have it published in Washington, D.C. The choice of Washington, D.C., the capital of the United States, was intended to highlight the cherished freedom that Americans enjoy and that Palestinians under occupation lack. Moreover, it was intended to highlight the irony in the United States' often unequivocal support of Israel, even when the latter carries out policies that the United States itself would not condone.

We are also proud of the fact that despite Israel's arbitrary and oppressive measures, it has not succeeded in silencing Palestinian voices. In fact, ***The Return*** reaches, and is distributed to people, throughout the West Bank and Gaza, and even inside Israel proper.

We promised our readers quality articles and in-depth analysis, and we have delivered our promise. The pages of ***The Return*** carried articles by prominent Palestinians and Americans such as Senator George McGovern, Professors Hisham Sharabi, Samih Farsoun, Fouad Moughrabi and Ghada Talhami, prominent journalist Raphael Calis, Ambassadors Clovis Maksoud and Abdel Raouf El-Reedy of the League of Arab States and of Egypt respectively, Israeli journalists Pinhas 'Anbari and Izhar Be'er, authors Geoffrey Aronson and Frederick Axelgard, peace activists Mubarak Awad and Mary Howell, and Israeli foreign affairs expert Jane Hunter, among others. We also brought to you interviews with Salah Khalaf, Mrs. Khalil Al-Wazir, Bassam Abu Sharif, and Elias Freij. In other words, we have brought to you, our readers, the most timely and in-depth analysis on the Palestine question from the most authoritative sources.

Our resolve to continue with our work is strengthened by Israel's unrelenting assault on Palestinian journalists and Palestinian press institutions. Many of our colleagues are in Israeli jails, and many of the Palestinian press institutions have been silenced either temporarily or permanently. We take note that the Palestine Press Service (PPS), the largest Palestinian news agency in the West Bank and Gaza, has been ordered shut by the Israelis since March of last year.

As we enter our second year of publication, we say to Israel, as we have been saying from the beginning, that freedom cannot be suppressed irrespective of military might. □

Palestinian Patience Has Its Limits

Should Palestinians resort to armed struggle in their fight against Israel?

This is a question that has been hotly debated, over the past few months, by Palestinians living under Israeli occupation and Palestinians living in the diaspora.

There are three schools of thought. The first supports the use of armed struggle while still pursuing peaceful means. The second school of thought believes that Palestinians should not deviate from the nonmilitary aspect of the struggle, particularly as it relates to the *Intifadah*. Finally, the third school of thought advocates armed struggle and does not believe that Palestinians can achieve self-determination and a state of their own by simply using peaceful means.

The debate was largely generated by the lack of progress toward a peacefully negotiated settlement between Israelis and Palestinians. Palestinian frustrations mounted significantly following Israel's intransigence and unwillingness to negotiate peace with the Palestinians following Palestinian concessions that were approved by the Palestine National Council during its November 1988 meeting in Algiers. Palestinians, at the time, indicated their willingness to negotiate on the basis of U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. These resolutions call for the return of occupied territories in exchange for peace with Israel.

Additional concessions were also made last December in Geneva, Switzerland, by Palestinian President Yasser Arafat. President Arafat stated that the PLO was willing to recognize Israel's "right" to exist. The PLO also renounced all forms of terrorism and reiterated its recognition of the aforementioned U.N. Resolutions. The result of these concessions was a decision by the United States to enter into a "substantive dialogue" with the PLO.

What did the Palestinians achieve thus far?

Most observers agree that Palestinians received very little in return. Admittedly, President Arafat was invited to Paris by French President François Mitterrand, and the United States held four official meetings with the PLO. But in tangible terms, these are small returns for tremendous Palestinian concessions.

With regard to the *Intifadah*, Palestinians have generally steered away from using arms against Israeli troops or settlers. Aside from the throwing of stones, the *Intifadah* has largely been nonviolent in nature. Although the *Intifadah*, particularly during its first months, engendered international sympathy and support, Israeli occupation continues.

Few Palestinians now believe that international sypmathy and support will liberate an inch of Palestine. Many Palestinians believe that only the United States has the power and the influence to pressure the Israelis into withdrawing from the West Bank and Gaza. However, it is widely known that the United States is unwilling to

expend any political capital to pressure Israel.

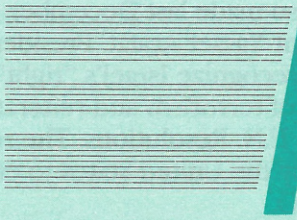
On the other hand, the threat of an Arab war against Israel no longer exists.

If the Palestinians decide to take up arms against Israel, are they any match for Israel's military might?

The answer is obvious. Still, many Palestinians believe that the only way Israel could be forced to relinquish control of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip is if its occupation becomes costly—not in monetary terms (the United States seems to be eternally willing to give the Israelis the funds that they want one way or another), rather in human terms. Some Palestinians argue that the main reason Israel withdrew from Lebanon following its 1982 invasion is because it was losing a soldier a day. If the same happens in the West Bank and Gaza, then the Israelis might do the same.

Palestinians are under no illusions that Israelis do not attach as much significance to Lebanon as they do to the West Bank and Gaza. Nor are the Palestinians under the illusion that if they use weapons against the Israelis, the Israelis will not use that as a pretext to commit massacres in the West Bank and Gaza. Notwithstanding, many Palestinians believe that the present situation of no peace and no Israeli withdrawal is worse than an all-out war. The difference is between a slow death, under the present circumstances, and a quick death in the event of a Palestinian-Israeli armed conflict.

What will happen next? No one knows. However, one thing is certain. There is a limit to Palestinian patience and there is a strong inclination among Palestinians to escalate the fight. □



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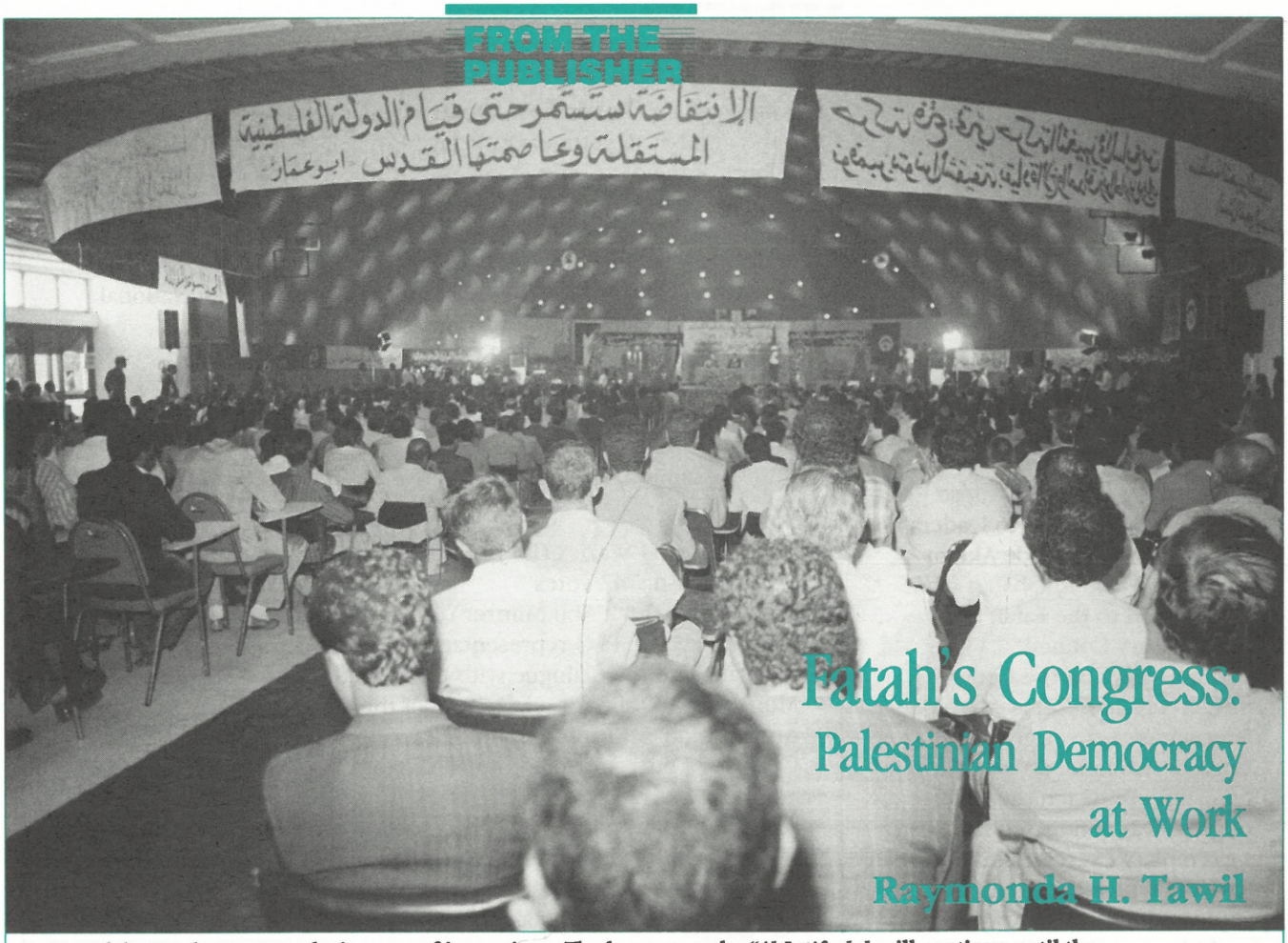

Fatah's Congress: Palestinian Democracy at Work

Raymonda H. Tawil

A view of the Fatah Congress during one of its sessions. The banner reads: *"Al-Intifadah* will continue until the establishment of an independent Palestinian State with Jerusalem as its capital—Abu Ammar [Yasser Arafat]." photo by Al-Rawass

Palestinian democracy was hard at work during the recent six-day Fatah Congress which was held in Tunisia from August 3-8. Fatah, the main group within the PLO, was holding its fifth Congress, the first in nine years.

Much has happened since the last congress, and the assembled delegates were more experienced and determined as ever to find a solution to the plight of the Palestinian people. Despite many setbacks during the past nine years that included the PLO exodus from Beirut and the Syrian-engineered split within Fatah, there were numerous successes to be acknowledged. The Palestinian *Intifadah* against Israel's occupation has won world sympathy and support for the plight of the Palestinian people. The pragmatic resolutions adopted by the Palestine National Council which was held in Algiers last November together with the declaration of independence are important political achievements. The decision by the United States to enter into a dialogue with the PLO, despite strong Israeli objections, was another step in the right direction.

Notwithstanding, the 1,102 Fatah delegates to the Congress had few illusions as to what needs to be done to make the movement a more vibrant tool in the creation of a Palestinian State.

First, the Fatah leadership recognized the need to bring new blood to leadership positions. That they did. The Fatah Central Committee was expanded from 15 to 21 members. At least three of these will be Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza. Many new members were also elected to the 50-seat Fatah Revolutionary Council.

Second, the Congress adopted structural steps designed to tighten the controls on the internal apparatus of Fatah and to help with the transformation of Fatah into a political party in the State of Palestine. Participants recognized that there existed shortcomings, but were determined to deal with them in a constructive fashion.

Three, the role of women within Fatah was greatly expanded and recognized. For the first time in Fatah's history, a woman, Mrs. Khalil Al-Wazir (Um Jihad) was elected to Fatah's highest political body, the Central Committee. Moreover, Fatah's Revolutionary Council included six female members. The role of women in the struggle was debated and the consensus was to involve women at all levels in recognition of their contributions and potential.

Fourth, participants in the Congress endorsed the PNC's historic resolutions and its

proclamation of a Palestinian State. However, this endorsement was couched in tough language that called for the intensification of armed struggle and all forms of struggle to eliminate Israeli occupation of Arab lands. This was a clear message that the rank and file of Fatah members felt strongly about.

Fifth, Palestinians expelled by Israel and Palestinian political detainees in Israeli jails were given a more visible role in the movement. A number of those expelled were elected to leadership positions. These include Akram Haniyeh and Abu Ali Shahin who were elected to the Fatah Revolutionary Council.

Commenting on the Congress, Tunisian President Zein Al-Abideen, under whose patronage the Congress was held, observed that the manner in which the Fatah Congress was conducted has been an exemplary exercise in democracy from which the Tunisian people and the entire Arab World should learn. □

New Fatah Central Committee

Following are the members of the new Central Committee of Fatah and the number of votes each received:

Members of the old Central Committee who were reelected:

- Yasser Arafat (named Central Committee chairman by acclamation)
- Farouk Kaddoumi (Abu Lotf), PLO foreign minister, 974 votes
- Salah Khalaf (Abu Iyad), 921 votes
- Khaled al-Hassan (Abu As-Saeed), head of the Palestine National Council's Foreign Relations Committee, 850 votes
- Hayel Abdelhamid (Abu Hol), 726 votes
- Mohammad Ghnaim (Abu Maher), 673 votes
- Hani al-Hassan, advisor to Arafat, 633 votes
- Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), 618 votes
- Salim al-Zanoun, Fatah representative in Kuwait, 483 votes.

New Members:

- Mrs. Intissar al-Wazir (Um Jihad), 824 votes
- Sakhr Habash, 743 votes
- Sobhi Abu Kersh (Abu Munzer), aide to the late Abu Jihad, 626 votes
- Hakam Balaawi, PLO representative in Tunis and member of the delegation to the dialogue with the United States, 624 votes
- Mohammad Kral (Abu Ala'), head of the PLO-run social welfare organization, 586 votes
- Col. Nasr Yousef, former commander of PLO forces in Jordan, 567 votes
- Al-Tayyeb Abderrahim, PLO representative in Yugoslavia, 552 votes
- Mohammad Jihad, former commander of PLO forces stationed in Algeria, 510 votes
- Abbas Zaki, an aide to Mahmoud Abbas, 475 votes

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photo by Al-Rawass

Palestinian President Yasser Arafat is presented with a plaque by children of Palestinian martyrs during the Fatah Congress.

Washington's Double Standard

Reactions to Arafat's Fatah vs. Reactions to Shamir's Likud

Raphael Calis

Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir has his Likud party, and Palestinian President and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat has his Fatah party. Both have recently used their grass-roots support in these political parties either to consolidate their grips on their respective followers or to extricate concessions from their opponents.

Quite significantly, however, both leaders and their parties are not treated equally—nor are they judged equally—by the U.S. government. U.S. reactions to both the Likud convention in July and the Fatah Congress in August offer a good opportunity for a study in contrasts. U.S. government commentary at these two times exposes once again the two standards the United States applies to the Palestinians and the Israelis.

When the Likud party convention adopted its four famous resolutions that would have virtually killed the prospects for holding elections in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, the U.S. government, through its spokesmen at the White House and the State Department, refused either to criticize Israel or condemn the Likud resolutions in any way. The world was told that the United States does not interfere in Israel's domestic politics.

The Bush administration went on a tangent and simply deflected having to criticize Israel, opting instead to emphasize that it did not consider these resolutions binding and that "the only game in town" was still the original plan that had been adopted by the Israeli coalition cabinet on May 14 and that called for the holding of elections for self-rule among the Palestinians in the occupied West

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Raphael Calis is the Washington, D.C. bureau chief of the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA). He is the former editor-in-chief of the London-based Middle East Magazine.

Bank and Gaza.

In stark contrast, less than 24 hours after the Fatah Congress had ended and its communiqué issued—even before Washington had received the full text of the political statement—the State Department came out lashing at Fatah, selectively expressing concern about the party's criticism of Israel and its declaration that it planned to "escalate armed action" against the Jewish state. It was not coincidental that the administration's comments echoed those of the Israeli government, which charged that Arafat had backtracked on the pledges he made in Geneva last year.

State Department spokesperson Margaret Tutwiler said, "Fatah's derogatory rhetoric on Israel, its tone of confrontation and violence and its preferences for unrealistic principles and solutions instead of practical ideas for peace are unhelpful."

She also said that the United States, in talks with the PLO, would try to ascertain if the party was still committed to the promises Arafat made last December. If the United States wanted to give the Palestinians the benefit of the doubt, Tutwiler could have easily reacted to the Fatah resolutions the same way the State Department did after the Likud convention by saying, for example, that its peace initiative was based on the public commitments the PLO made in Geneva and Algiers and not on Fatah's final communiqué.

Why did the State Department opt not to give due credit to Arafat? Why did the State Department not admit that the very essence of what took place at the Fatah Congress in Tunis was that Arafat actually succeeded in pushing through his initiative of "peace through diplomacy" and "unarmed resistance," and had succeeded in winning a broad margin of support from the 1,100 delegates attending the Palestine National Council (PNC) in Algiers in November and the Geneva declarations in December? Clearly, the State Department had misread and misunderstood what transpired at the Fatah Congress. A second reading of the Fatah deliberations might prove that the hasty U.S. reaction was ill founded and misdirected.

Why does the United States always see nothing wrong when an Israeli leader must worry about domestic politics, treating him with kid gloves while Palestinian leaders, like President Arafat, do not get the same benefit of the doubt?

Why did Washington refuse to recognize that Arafat had succeeded in convincing his grass-roots supporters in Fatah of his peace strategy? Why did Washington refuse to recognize that Shamir had failed to do the same with his Likud party supporters? Did Arafat not prove that he was more serious and interested in a peaceful solution than Shamir in recent months?

Why did the State Department opt to ignore the part of the final communiqué which stressed that the Palestinians remain committed to peace on the basis of a "comprehensive settlement" to lead to a two-state solution? Why, for example, did the United States ignore that some of the hardliners in Fatah, including the PLO representative in Saudi Arabia, were ousted from the Executive Committee of Fatah by secret balloting because of their known opposition to Arafat's peace strategy?

The Bush administration also knew fully well that neither the PLO nor Fatah had ever rejected the legitimacy of armed struggle in the moderation of Palestinian policies and that it was PLO policy to continue to resist Israel's occupation by civil means. That had been made abundantly clear to the United States in the ongoing dialogue in Tunis and it was something that had been accepted by the United States publicly on several occasions. The U.S. government also knows that no two Palestinians would quibble about the need for the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip—a point stressed at every Palestinian meeting, including that of Fatah in Tunis.

The United States had also publicly accepted the fact that despite the dialogue and the Algiers and Geneva declarations, the Palestinian right to mount resistance against the Israeli occupation—through the 22-month-old *Intifadah*—was legal and justified by international law and will not be halted until the occupation is terminated.

Equally significant, Fatah's rejection of the election plan as outlined by Shamir was not new. The PLO itself had informed Washington in Tunis that Shamir's plan was unacceptable as proposed at the time. The Bush administration continues to ignore the fact that Israel had ensured, *a priori*, that the plan will be rejected by refusing to commit itself to ending the occupation, by refusing to declare its readiness to exchange land for peace, by refusing to link elections and self-rule to a final comprehensive settlement, and by refusing to allow all Palestinians to participate in the elections in a free and democratic atmosphere. These are issues that even the United States itself shared with the Palestinian leadership and had stated so in public.

photo by Al-Rawass

Fatah leaders including Salah Khalaf (Abu Iyad), Sheikh Abdul Hamid El-Sayeh, and Farouk Kaddoumi (Abu Lotf) at the opening ceremonies of the Fifth Fatah Congress.

The major bone of contention between the Bush administration and the PLO at this stage is the question of a Palestinian state. Ironically, this is one of the few issues that the United States and Israel seem to agree upon.

No wonder Palestinians reacted angrily to Washington's criticisms of the Fatah Congress statement. The negative U.S. reaction stood in stark contrast to the statements that were issued—or rather not issued—by the State Department at the end of the Likud convention in July.

Why did the administration opt to remain silent at the time by not criticizing the "tone" of the Likud communiqué and why also did it not accuse the Likud of "preferences for unrealistic principles and solutions?" After all, the United States realized fully that the limitations placed by Likud would have automatically torpedoed the holding of "democratic and free elections." Free and democratic principles seem to be upheld by the United States worldwide except when it comes to the Palestinians. Furthermore, why does the United States always see nothing wrong when an Israeli leader must worry about domestic politics, treating him with kid gloves while Palestinian leaders, like President Arafat, do not get the same benefit of the doubt?

If anything, the Fatah Congress, just as the Palestine National Council deliberations had done before it, proved to all those who wanted to see that the Palestinians enjoy free, democratic, and independent debate as much if not more than Israel or its political parties.

And, once again the State Department seems to have missed the fact that after all, Fatah is one political faction among eight others that operate within the PLO that had already voted for and accepted Arafat's peaceful initiative at the PNC meeting in Algiers. In fact, Washington should know that Fatah, which enjoys a majority inside the PNC, was the party behind the whole new peace strategy forged in Algiers.

In its rush to criticize the Fatah Congress, Washington seems to have purposely missed a few signals coming out of that meeting just as it had done, only in reverse, after the Likud convention.

For example, when Shamir went to his Likud party convention in July, his leadership was clearly being threatened by the Sharon Levy faction of his party. The mere fact that he was forced to accept the four-point limitations adopted by the party showed that his power was limited, to say the least.

In sharp contrast, Arafat's

leadership at the Fatah Congress was at no time being questioned or challenged. The implication should have been clear for all to see that the Fatah delegates were fully supportive of Arafat's peace initiative, his recognition of Israel, his acceptance of U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338, and his "renunciation" of terrorism.

In fact, unlike Shamir, Arafat emerged from the Fifth Fatah Congress with his power enhanced. He was elected the new commander-in-chief and chair of the Central Committee of Fatah. As a sign of confidence in his leadership, all the people he had nominated to key positions inside Fatah were also elected.

In principle, it should be obvious to Washington that it is in its interests and the interests of peace not to continue alienating the moderate factions among the Palestinians. If, as Washington claims, the tone of the Fatah Congress was more militant than in the past, then the Bush administration should be asking why that is happening, even among those who are considered "moderate" Palestinians. The U.S. government would find out that, in part, its own negative position toward the Palestinians and its lack of positive responses to repeated Palestinian initiatives are basically responsible for the hardening of the rank-and-file Palestinian.

Instead of directing every negative comment toward the Palestinians, it would do the United States more good to focus its efforts on Israel, which continues to erect one obstacle after the other in an attempt to block the peace process.

It has become obvious to experts in Washington and elsewhere that if the peace process is not going forward, it is not for lack of trying by the Palestinians or its leadership. Instead of directing every negative comment toward the Palestinians, it would do the United States more good to focus its efforts on Israel, which continues to erect one obstacle after the other in an attempt to block the peace process. In fact, Washington's silence toward Israel's continued prevarications is primarilly to blame for the current diplomatic deadlock. □

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The Middle East Roller Coaster Ride to Peace

Muhammad Hallaj

Making peace between Palestinians and Israelis has taken on the feel of a roller coaster ride. Particularly during the past several months, the "road to peace" has been full of ups and downs and sudden twists and turns.

First, in November 1988, the PLO uttered "the magic words." These magic words, like the magic kiss in the fairy tales, were presumed to be able to turn the Palestinian from a toad into a prince. Recognition of Israel, acceptance of U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 383, and denunciation of terrorism were to work a miracle on Israeli opinion, revolutionize U.S. policy, and make peace inescapable. But all that came of these magic words was one miracle so unimpressive that no one is bragging about it. That miracle seems to have produced little more than a U.S.-PLO dialogue—not recognition or negotiations that is heavily burdened with constraints on which U.S. representatives are involved and the agenda that they are permitted to discuss.

Then came the avalanche of ideas about why these magic words were not so magical after all. "Did the PLO mean what it said?" some asked. "Shouldn't the PLO do more?" asked others. "Who needs PLO recognition?" the Israelis asked rhetorically. A stream of articles, statements, and lately, books began to appear arguing in effect that the Palestinians—being Arabs—cannot be trusted. How can anyone ask Israel to make peace with *them* on the basis of statements they make? The fertile minds of Israel's friends in and out of Congress worked tirelessly to legislate new impediments to the U.S.-PLO dialogue.

The Palestinian peace offensive was too significant and dramatic to ignore, especially since the world community as a whole recognized it as a historic breakthrough and waited for Israel to reciprocate with a meaningful move of its own. Even Israel's friends, mostly in Washington, were feeling embarrassed by Israel's political paralysis and by its apparent inability to see beyond the muzzle of a gun.

For a short period of time, the Bush administration showed reluctance to get involved in the situation, finding it sufficient to call on the parties to work to diminish the level of tension in occupied Palestine, betraying more of an interest in pacification than in a settlement. The Bush administration began demanding substantive ideas from Israel about the future of the West Bank and Gaza.

The uneasy alliance between Israel's Labor and Likud parties was aggravated by policy disagreements regarding the West Bank and Gaza, and the disarray in Israel was also reflected in the American Jewish community, Israel's main power base abroad. Fears increased that Israel's support where it mattered most, the United States, was "eroding."

In the meantime, the *Intifadah* continued to shatter the Israeli illusion that the *status quo ante* could be restored, and senior Israeli military officials—failing to crush the *Intifadah* by military means—demanded a political solution. Israel could not avoid making a move.

The Israeli proposal for holding elections in the West Bank and Gaza must be seen against this background. The proposal was put forward as an unpleasant necessity, an unavoidable move in the political game of continuing the occupation. It was not put forward as a potential opportunity for peace to be sincerely pursued. Shamir did not bring with him to Washington a plan to resolve the conflict with the Palestinians. What he brought was a scheme to pacify the Palestinian Uprising and world public opinion. The scheme was not designed to deal with the problems of occupied

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Palestine, but with Israel's problems in occupied Palestine. Israel wanted to eat its cake and have it too. It wanted to end the *Intifadah* without ending its root cause—the occupation.

Israel proposed that the Palestinians end their Uprising, then under Israeli supervision—elect delegates not affiliated with the PLO to negotiate interim arrangements for "limited autonomy." Limited autonomy was to be followed after a number of years with negotiations about the ultimate status of the West Bank and Gaza. Israeli spokesmen explained that although the formal text of the proposal did not touch on these matters, the 140,000 Palestinians living in Jerusalem would not be permitted to participate as voters or candidates in these elections. Also, Israeli troops would not be withdrawn from any of occupied Palestine—not even voting sites, and outside supervision of the elections would not be allowed. Finally, Israeli spokesmen explained, the outcome of the proposed elections would provide Palestinian representatives for negotiating the ultimate status of occupied Palestine, excluding the option of self-determination.

The U.S. government went out of its way to commend Israel for its "peace initiative." It found flaws in it, such as the fact that it ignored the sensitive issue of Jerusalem, and it encouraged Israel to address such issues. But it was relieved that the Shamir government was finally willing to consider political means of dealing with its Palestinian subjects.

Washington saw the Israeli glass half full and ignored the empty half. Although the Shamir plan made no reference to the land for-peace formula which the U.S. government along with the rest of the world community considers to be the only feasible framework for Palestinian-Israeli peace, Washington found virtue in the fact that the Shamir proposal did not explicitly reject the land-for-peace formula. Although Shamir and his aides lost no time in excluding options considered most fundamentally important to the Palestinians, that evasion of explicit rejection was interpreted as a sign of readiness to consider all options.

Likud and its attitudes remain dominant, a fact which has so far meant that Israel sought, not a negotiated peace with the Palestinians, but capitulation by the Palestinians.

The Bush administration hoped that an Israeli political proposal, no matter how deficient, would do something for Israel's badly tarnished image and the increasingly disillusioned public opinion in the United States which was beginning to question long-held stereotypes of Palestinians and Israelis, and the policy that such stereotypes had supported in the past. It also hoped that the elections proposal would reduce tensions within Israel, lessen the possibility that the Likud-Labor coalition would disintegrate, and soften international clamor for a peace conference.

Finally, the elections proposal provided the Bush administration with at least the skeleton of a Middle East policy after months of floundering and trying to avoid involvement. It gave the Bush administration something to talk about in its sputtering dialogue with the PLO. Thus, the United States adopted the elections proposal and proceeded to try to sell it to the Palestinians.

The Palestinian reaction was ambivalent. The idea of the Palestinian people voting and choosing their own representatives to articulate their aspirations and negotiate on their behalf was attractive, in principle. They were quick to point out that they have always insisted on this right. They had substantial reservations, however, about the way Shamir proposed to proceed and about the general purpose of this supposed exercise in democracy.

More than 80 prominent personalities from the occupied West Bank and Gaza, including most potential candidates for future talks with Israel, endorsed a position paper. This first Palestinian reaction, described the Shamir proposal as "nothing but a public relations maneuver designed to extricate Israel from its isolation." The statement read that the Israeli plan attempts to divide the Palestinian people, to bypass their chosen leadership—the PLO, and to evade substantive issues such as self-determination.

The signers of the document were careful to point out that rejecting Shamir's proposal was not based upon opposition to democratic elections. They noted that the Palestinians had made great strides in democratizing their national movement and its decision-making processes. But elections in the shadow of a foreign occupying army, where the Palestinians are committed in advance to what sort of people to elect and what sort of issues their representatives are to raise violate the Palestinian notion of democracy.

The PLO was more interested in the Israeli proposal. It wanted to evolve it from a scheme to evade peace to a plan for achieving peace. Its view was that the Palestinians had the right to choose their representatives, that negotiations should

tackle interim measures as well as address the final status of occupied Palestine. In that sense, once its inadequacies were dealt with, the Israeli plan could be made into a working procedure. If the elections could be made truly democratic, and if the subsequent negotiations could be made into serious exchanges regarding substantive issues, the process could work. If free and internationally supervised elections are held, the PLO suggested, and if they are made an integral part of a peace process within an agreed general framework on the model of the Namibia agreement—then it could become a viable peace process.

To achieve such objectives, the PLO made a number of counter proposals as amendments to the Israeli plan. It asked for international supervision of the elections to insure their freedom, it asked for Israel's commitment to respect the outcome of the elections, it asked for the removal of Israeli occupation troops from occupied Palestine and their replacement with an international force to avoid the possibility of intimidation or reprisals, it asked for the right of Jerusalem residents to participate in the elections, and it asked for guarantees that the elections and the interim arrangements be an integral part of a final settlement process to ensure that the Palestinians are not being led into a dead-end alley. The PLO was not taking a confrontational stance but was making a serious effort to keep channels open and the process moving in a promising direction. It was a strong PLO signal that a fair settlement which addressed the needs of both parties was its overriding aim, regardless of the route taken to achieve it.

In effect, the PLO received Shamir's proposals more kindly than his constituency in Israel did. Many of Shamir's people were apprehensive and in some cases downright hostile. They saw in the proposal an admission that the future of the West Bank and Gaza was negotiable, something which violated the core of their ideological beliefs. They considered the proposal to be an act of submission to U.S. pressure on Israel, and they feared more pressure might lead to more concessions. They feared that Israel's readiness to do other than just quell the Palestinian Uprising would encourage the *Intifadah* to go on. And they feared that the process, regardless of the safeguards, would unleash political dynamics the ultimate outcome of which may not be easily controllable.

If Washington continues to signal to Israel its unwillingness to use pressure, including economic pressure, a unique and perhaps unrepeatable opportunity to bring about a political settlement to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict may be lost, at least for the foreseeable future.

Shamir reassured his critics that he had not given away anything in Washington, that the process would not even begin until the *Intifadah* had ended, and that he is committed that Israel would not agree to giving up one inch of territory in negotiations with the Arabs. His proposal, in effect, was a plan to end the Uprising without ending the occupation.

Opposition to the scheme was considerable in Israel. When it was voted on in the Knesset, more than half of the 120 members abstained or were absent, and only 43 members, considerably less than half, voted for it. It certainly did not represent an Israeli consensus. So, when Shamir faced a rebellion in his Likud party against his plan, he did not fight it, as many observers had expected him to do in deference to his Labor coalition partners, his assurances to his allies in Washington, or on behalf of his own political credibility. After all, the rebellion in his party was the excuse he needed to dodge his own commitment to the plan. The plan emulated the Camp David agreement which he had opposed 10 years earlier, and it was forced upon him in the first place by his Labor coalition partners.

Ideologically, the idea of negotiating with the Palestinians or anyone else about the future of the West Bank and Gaza did not sit well with Shamir anyway. So he accepted the four conditions advocated by his rivals in the Likud which in effect emasculated the plan and invalidated it: The elections were not to be held until after the Uprising had ended. The Palestinian residents of Jerusalem were to be excluded. Jewish settlements would continue to be established in the West Bank and Gaza, emphasizing Israel's intentions to annex them eventually. And withdrawal from any part of occupied Palestine would not be acceptable to Israel during negotiations on the West Bank and Gaza's ultimate status. The amendments to the plan stripped it of all pretense and were calculated by their sponsors to ensure its rejection by the Palestinians.

The PLO, determined not to let Israel off the hook, reacted with considerable restraint, more than the Israeli Labor party which threatened to pull out of the coalition, to this latest maneuver to wriggle out of the peace process. It further softened its demands for guarantees that the scheme would lead to democratic elections and an ultimate settlement by asking for the withdrawal of Israeli troops from

areas around voting booths, rather than the entire territory, and it indicated its willingness to accept Egyptian and American observers to the elections. Instead of demanding Israeli acceptance of Palestinian self-determination as the objective of the negotiations on the ultimate status of the West Bank and Gaza, the PLO asked for the less demanding condition that Israel declare its acceptance of the land-for peace formula.

The PLO position became attractive to the Labor wing of the coalition, which argued that remaining gaps could be bridged by procedural gymnastics. The Israeli view that elections are not to be held in Jerusalem, for example, could be reconciled with the PLO demand that all Palestinians in occupied Palestine be allowed to participate, by permitting Jerusalem residents to vote in precincts outside the city of Jerusalem. But the Labor party has emerged as decidedly the junior partner in this Israeli government. Likud and its attitudes remain dominant, a fact which has so far meant that Israel sought, not a negotiated peace with the Palestinians, but capitulation by the Palestinians.

It has become evident that Israel, at least in this period of Likud hegemony, is incapable of resolving its conflict with the Palestinians without sufficient external pressure to compel it to do so. Verbal pressure by the Bush administration, and evident grumbling from the American Jewish community, have not been without effect. At least they have moved the Israeli government away from total reliance on force in dealing with the Palestinians. But more pressure is obviously needed to induce Israel to go beyond form to substance. If Washington continues to signal to Israel its unwillingness to use pressure, including economic pressure, a unique and perhaps unrepeatable opportunity to bring about a political settlement to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict may be lost, at least for the foreseeable future. □

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Correction

In the July 1989 issue of *The Return,* two charts were used on pages 18 and 19 in Judith Gabriel's article entitled, "Israel's Use of House Demolitions: Collective Punishment on the Rise." The source of the charts was mistakenly omitted. We regret the omission, and would like to thank the Chicago-based DataBase Project on Palestinian Human Rights from whose publication, *The Cost of Freedom,* these charts were taken.

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This article is void of political analysis. I just wanted to write about some of my personal experiences during a recent trip to the West Bank and Gaza, my first since the beginning of the *Intifadah*.

Although I was born and raised in Jerusalem, and had to live under Israel's occupation for many years, I could never get used to life under occupation. The feeling of insecurity coupled with fear was always there. Besides, like other Palestinians, Israelis attempted to make us feel inferior, as though our presence in our own homeland was an imposition.

The moment the plane landed at the Ben Gurion International Airport, I was gripped with that feeling of insecurity. Israelis do not need an excuse to harass, interrogate, or even arrest Palestinians. As I stepped off the plane, it felt as though I was stepping voluntarily into a huge prison—my homeland.

The first day I was in Jerusalem, where most of my family lives, happened to be the day that my sister was permitted to visit her 21-year-old son. Usama has been in Israeli jails since July 1987 allegedly because he participated in the manufacturing of homemade weapons—an allegation

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Bishara A. Bahbah is editor-in-chief of The Return.

One of the rooms sealed by Israeli troops inside a Palestinian house in the Jalazoon refugee camp near Ramallah.

Most refugee camps have open sewer systems, such as this one at the Jalazoon refugee camp near Ramallah.

substantiated, not by facts, but rather by the "confession" of a weak soul. Usama, despite spending over two years in prison, has not yet been sentenced.

We were up early in the morning. We drove to the Ramallah prison, about 20 minutes from Jerusalem. My nephew and his family were lucky. The prison was not far from where they live and prisoners did not have to sleep in tents. Often Palestinian families travel for hours to get to some Israeli prisons. The unluckiest are those 4,800 Palestinian prisoners who are assigned to Ansar III, in the middle of the Negev Desert, several hours' drive from Jerusalem. These prisoners are usually administrative detainees. In other words, they are held without trial, for political reasons, for a period of six months at a time. Recently, this was extended to one year at a time. These prisoners live in tents erected in the middle of nowhere with limited supplies of water and in unsanitary conditions.

When we arrived at the Ramallah prison, we had to register our names on a list handled by a Palestinian, usually a relative of one of the prisoners, who happened to be the first to arrive that morning. This way, a proper list is maintained and no one loses his turn. By 8:00 a.m., many people had already signed up. There is no waiting lounge. People simply wait on the street under the rain, during winter, and scorching sun during the summer.

I looked around me and saw old men, women, fathers and brothers patiently waiting for their names to be called out. I even saw a white-bearded Orthodox priest, also waiting. Later, I had the opportunity to talk to the priest whose parish was in the nearby village of Bir Zeit. He told me that he came to see his nephew who had been imprisoned for political reasons.

We also had to submit our identity cards or, in my case, my American passport, to the Israeli troops at the door. Each person wanting to visit a prisoner has to do that. Four people are allowed to visit a prisoner at one time. Visits are allowed once every two weeks.

My nephew's name was read out. We rushed to the door. In the first room we entered, we were given back our identity cards/passports by an Israeli soldier. Then, the men had to go to the right, and the women to the left. We were all body searched.

After everyone was cleared, we waited until the group of visitors ahead of us finished with their visit. While we were waiting, an Israeli soldier started harassing a woman, who I was told had three sons in various jails. He told her, "Move, cow." Defiantly, and with no fear whatsoever, she responded, "Shut up, pig." A scuffle ensued, and for her punishment, she was denied the right to visit her son.

We then proceeded to the meeting room. I saw my nephew together with five other young men behind bars. My eyes became watery. I was about to cry. I said to myself that I should not. My nephew would be disappointed. What I should do is provide him all the encouragement and support that I can. After all, *he* is the prisoner.

I held back my tears and braved a huge smile. I wanted to hug him and tell him how proud I was of him. I could not. All he could do was stick his finger through one of the holes in the barbed wires, and I shook it. My sister, his mother, was all smiles. She was proud of him and very happy that I could go see him.

I asked him if they [Israeli soldiers] tortured him or hurt him. He said that when he was first arrested, they beat him up and tortured him. They even placed him for several days in solitary confinement in a room the size of a closet. Now, he is not tortured, but prison authorities are trying to save money by cutting down on the prisoners' weekly ration of meat and other foods.

My sister was proud of herself. She succeeded in sneaking a few nuts for him—roasted almonds, peanuts, and some cashews. Prison authorities do not allow family members to bring such items to the prisoners. But my nephew liked them, and my sister was willing to go to any length for him to have them. Throughout the visit, she snuck one nut at a time to him through the holes in the barbed wires.

The half hour we were allowed with him went by fast. As we left, many people still waited in line to see their loved ones.

While in the West Bank and Gaza, I discovered what is meant by the "power of the stone." In order

to better identify and control Palestinians since the early days of occupation, Israeli occupation authorities instituted multi-colored license plates with huge letters attached to each license plate. A blue license plate with the letter "B" alphabet means that the vehicle is a private West Bank car from the Bethlehem area.

Since the beginning of the *Intifadah*, Palestinian youths have identified whether the people in a car were Palestinian or Israeli by the license plate. Israeli cars have yellow license plates with no letters attached to them. Therefore, any car with a yellow license plate driving anywhere in the West Bank and Gaza is a target for Palestinian stones.

Palestinians living in Jerusalem were issued yellow license plates. To the Israelis, East Jerusalem which was occupied in 1967 and annexed that same year, is part and parcel of Israel. Therefore, Palestinian cars from Jerusalem have often been stoned by indiscriminating youths. What Palestinians from Jerusalem often do is spread a ***kaffiyeh***, or Palestinian headdress, on the dashboard of their cars in the hope that the youth throwing the stone will see it and recognize it as a Palestinian car.

I have seen Israeli buses preceeded and followed by military jeeps in order to intimidate stone throwers. Frequently, that has provided little protection either for the bus or for the military escorts.

Israeli settlers living in the West Bank and Gaza, whose cars have yellow license plates, quickly picked up on the trick and started using the ***kaffiyeh***. Spreading a ***kaffiyeh*** on your dashboard is, therefore, no longer a guarantee that you will not be greeted with a stone. Other tricks were developed for night identification. These included flashing your headlights at regular intervals or dimming one light and not the other by

A recently demolished home in the Jalazoon refugee camp.

manipulating some of the wiring.

The bottom line is that the stone has proven its power in restricting Israeli civilian, and often military, movement in the West Bank and Gaza. I have seen Israeli buses preceeded and followed by military jeeps in order to intimidate stone throwers. Frequently, that has provided little protection either for the bus or for the military escorts.

Can you imagine having to conduct all your business between the hours of 8 a.m. to 12 noon? This is what happens throughout the West Bank and Gaza. Every day there is a strike that starts at 12 noon. By 12:30 p.m., with the exception of some pharmacies and bakeries, you will not find a single Palestinian shop open. There are days of total strike when public transportation and commercial activity come to a standstill all day long.

At the beginning of the *Intifadah*, Israeli troops attempted to force shopkeepers to reopen or to keep their shops open during certain hours. That did not succeed. Only the Unified National Leadership of the Uprising determines when shops are to be open or remain closed.

I cannot conclude without sharing with you some observations about a visit to the Jalazoon refugee camp near Ramallah. If people do not know you at the camp, you would have to be a brave soul to go in alone. Camp residents have become very suspicious of strangers because of the heavy-handed treatment by Israel's Shin Bet, or internal security forces, who have even disguised themselves as international press in order to enter the camp to locate and arrest activists.

After parking the car, my escort, who is very well-known throughout the camp, set out on foot to visit some people whose house was recently demolished. On our way, my escort stopped when she saw a woman, who was in her fifties, rushing off. She stopped her and asked her how she was and where she was heading. The woman, who was wearing a traditional *fallahi* (peasant) dress, told us that she could not sleep that night. She was worried about her 18-year old son. Although she had two other sons in Israeli jails, she was not as worried about them. Her 18-year-old son, she told us, was taken to jail by Israeli troops with a bullet wound in his stomach. He was still bleeding, she said, when they dragged him off to jail. She did not even know to which jail he was taken.

The woman, who was wearing a traditional fallahi *(peasant) dress, told us that she could not sleep that night. She was worried about her 18-year-old son. Although she had two other sons in Israeli jails, she was not as worried about them. Her 18-year-old son, she told us, was taken to jail by Israeli troops with a bullet wound in his stomach. He was still bleeding, she said, when they dragged him off to jail. She did not even know to which jail he was taken.*

She was off to the International Committee of the Red Cross office to ask for their intervention to try and locate the son so that he might recieve the proper medical attention. She told my escort that it was nice seeing her, but she had to rush.

We then visited another house. To be precise, I should call it a makeshift hut. We saw a young teenager at the door. My escort asked her where her parents were. The girl answered that they were visiting one of her brothers who was in jail. She had four brothers in jail, and another was on the run from Israeli troops. She invited us in and showed us how her family of 10 has been forced to live in one bedroom. Israeli troops had closed off all the rooms in the house, as a form of punishment, with the exception of the front room.

As we walked to visit another family, we could smell the open sewers. When Palestinian refugees fled to the camp, everyone was hoping that it would be a temporary refuge until they could return to their homes. However, 41 years later, the camp was still without an underground or even covered sewer system.

The family we went to visit next was at a neighbor's house. Their house had recently been demolished by the Israelis. I tried to console the eldest girl, when she abruptly interrupted me. She told me, "We are no better than most people. If this is the price we have to pay to get rid of the Israelis, then let them demolish the entire camp. We don't care. We want them out. We want our own country back."

There was nothing that I could add. Every day I was in the West Bank and Gaza, I encountered people with similar determination and vigor. The people, unlike the Jerusalem- and Ramallah-based politicians, are suffering daily and are totally prepared to sacrifice everything. I have never witnessed such determination to get rid of Israel's occupation at, literally, any price.

All I can say to the Israelis is . . . beware. □

The U.S. Congress and Palestine: A Legislative Report

Jeffrey V. Steele

Two legislative issues concerning the Palestinian problem were in a position of prominence in the U.S. Congress in recent weeks. Both the House of Representatives and the Senate passed amendments dealing with the subject of West Bank schools. However, at the same time, several efforts were made to pass measures limiting the dialogue between the United States and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

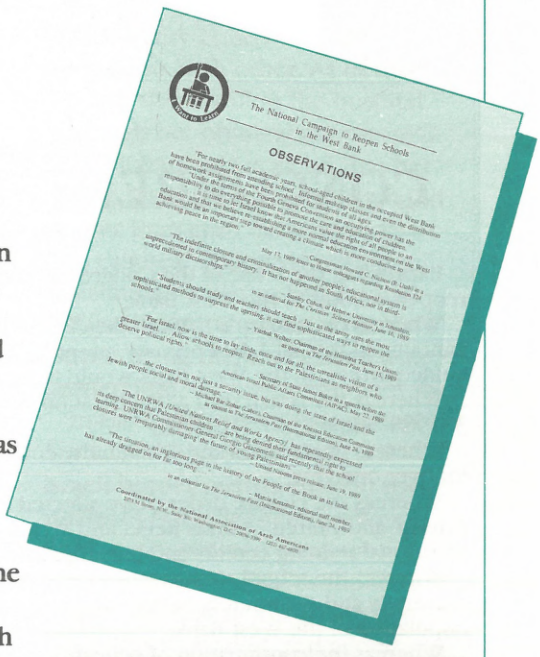
The West Bank schools issue was first brought before Congress with House Concurrent Resolution 124 introduced by Representative Howard Nielson (R-Utah) on May 16, 1989. The resolution expressed the sense of the Congress that Israel should take immediate steps to reopen the schools in the West Bank.

The resolution contained clauses noting that all 1,194 primary, preparatory, and secondary schools in the West Bank had been closed almost continuously since January 20, 1989 affecting 300,000 school-aged children. The resolution also pointed out that education in any form, including informal makeup classes outside of school premises or the distribution of homework, was prohibited.

In June, the National Association of Arab Americans (NAAA) began efforts aimed at the passage of H. Con. Res. 124 in the House and the introduction and passage of a similar measure in the Senate. As part of this project, a task force was created involving Arab-American, Jewish-American, education, and religious groups, all working together in what was dubbed as the National Campaign to Reopen Schools in the West Bank. Through the efforts of the Task Force, 26 congressional cosponsors were eventually added to the resolution.

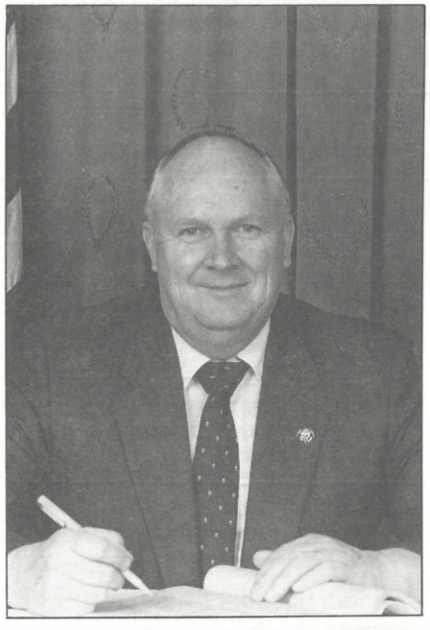
In response to the large amount of support generated for the schools issue, Nielson sought to offer his resolution as an amendment to the Foreign Assistance Authorization Bill, H.R. 2655. The proposed amendment ran into an onslaught of opposition from the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), which circulated a memo entitled "West Bank Schools Used as Centers of Violent Activity" claiming that Israel had been forced to close the schools for security reasons.

Nielson was persuaded to withhold his amendment at that time due to an upcoming Likud party Central Committee meeting in Israel, and instead offer it as part of



The National Campaign to Reopen Schools in the West Bank

OBSERVATIONS



U.S. Representative Howard C. Nielson (D-Utah), the key sponsor of the House Resolution calling on Israel to reopen schools in the West Bank.

Jeffrey V. Steele is a research analyst for the National Association of Arab Americans. He holds a Master's in Arab Studies from Georgetown's Center for Contemporary Arab Studies.

101ST CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 124

Expressing the sense of the Congress that Israel should take immediate steps to reopen schools in the West Bank.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 16, 1989

Mr. NIELSON of Utah (for himself, Mr. DICKINSON, Mr. HANSEN, and Mr. SAVAGE) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

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CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Congress that Israel should take immediate steps to reopen schools in the West Bank;

Whereas on January 20, 1989, the civil administration of the Israeli Government announced that all 1,194 primary, preparatory, and secondary schools, as well as kindergartens, in the West Bank would be closed "until further notice";

Whereas the Israeli civil administration issued similar closure orders on February 3, 1988, and on July 21, 1988.

Whereas universities and community colleges in the West Bank have been closed for over one year;

Whereas the closure orders have affected all West Bank schools including public, private, and United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) schools, as well as vocational training centers and universities;

Whereas the school closures affect 300,000 school aged children and 18,000 university and community college students, or roughly 40 percent of the population of the West Bank;

Whereas the continuation of education in any form, including informal makeup classes outside of school premises or the distribution of homework, is prohibited;

Whereas the school closures have the most profound impact on primary-aged schoolchildren in as much as educators believe that the denial of instruction to students at certain stages in their education leaves serious gaps in their cognitive development which are very difficult to correct at a later stage;

Whereas Article 50 of the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (Convention IV) states that "The Occupying Power shall, with the cooperation of the national and local authorities, facilitate the proper working of all institutions devoted to the care and education of children;

Whereas Article 33 of that Convention specifies that "No protected person may be punished for an offense he or she has not personally committed";

Whereas reopening the schools on the West Bank would make an important contribution to improving relations between Palestinians and the Government of Israel; and

Whereas reestablishing a more normal educational environment on the West Bank would be an important step toward creating a climate in the West Bank and Gaza which is more conducive to progress toward peace and in which mutually acceptable local elections could take place, a proposal put forward by Israeli Prime Minister Shamir during his recent visit to the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of the Congress that Israel should take immediate steps to reopen schools in the West Bank.

the Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill, H.R. 2939. However, before H.R. 2939 reached the House floor, the Israeli government announced the phased opening of the schools.

In light of the Israeli announcement, Nielson offered an amendment containing compromise language which expressed the hope of Congress that all schools would be opened at an early date and would remain open. This amendment passed unanimously on July 21.

Simultaneously, a group of senators, including John Chafee (R-Rhode Island), Mark Hatfield (R-Oregon), and Nancy Kassebaum (R-Kansas), was working to pass a similar amendment in the Senate. On July 20, Kassebaum and Chafee succeeded in unanimously passing an amendment attached to the State Department Authorization Bill, S. 1160, urging that all schools be opened at an early date, remain open, and not be closed for political reasons.

While the State Department Authorization Bill, S. 1160, was on the floor of the Senate, Senators Jesse Helms (R-North Carolina) and Charles Grassley (R-Iowa) offered an amendment that would prohibit the administration from negotiating with any PLO representative unless the president certified to Congress that the representative had not directly participated in, or conspired in, or was an accessory to the planning or execution of a terrorist activity which resulted in the death, injury or kidnapping of an American citizen.

This amendment was ostensibly in response to recent meetings between U.S. Ambassador to Tunisia Robert Pelletreau and Salah Khalaf, the number two man in the PLO. However, in view of previous amendments aimed at ending the U.S.-PLO dialogue which Helms has introduced, it is difficult to see his amendment as anything more than just another such attempt.

The Bush administration, which also saw the amendment as a threat

See LEGISLATIVE REPORT *on page 29*

photo by Karen White

Palestinian flag atop the Mosque at Nahhaleen Village.

The Nahhaleen Massacre

Karen White & Saida Hamad

Early in the morning on April 13, 50-year-old Mohammad had just finished his prayers and was thinking of his wife as he stepped out of the mosque. She would be worried over his being late so he hurried, eager to be home again and out of the chilly dawn air.

Suddenly he was startled by the nearby crack of a single gunshot. He peered around him in the gloom, trying to gauge distance and direction. And then, with no warning, the dawn erupted in an explosion of gunfire all around him. He heard someone screaming through a loudspeaker, and before he could collect his thoughts, was grabbed from behind. He whirled around to face his assailant, and in the split second it took his mind to register the uniform of an Israeli border guard, he fell to his knees from a powerful blow to his head with a truncheon. The soldier continued to pound Mohammad on the head, shoulders and back.

As, Mohammad, an older man tried to fend off his younger attacker, he cried, "Why? Why are you beating me?"

The young man, swinging his club again and again to punctuate the words through his clenched teeth growled, "Because we want to have a massacre here today! Today, we will have a massacre to your liking!"

Mohammad had managed to get to his feet, but with the final word "liking," the Israeli border guard shoved him backward. Mohammad staggered and fell again, onto his back, aching in every limb from the many blows. The soldier lifted his boot and ground the heel into the older man's abdomen. He kicked him once, twice, again, and again. Mohammad's breath whooshed from his lungs. He doubled up on his side in pain, gasping for air, and fought back the waves of blackness sweeping over him. The Israeli snorted contemptuously, turned, and left in search of new prey.

Mohammad lay there a time, unable to move his limbs or lift his head. A neighbor, who had been watching the carnage in the street from his window, raced from the door of his home to Mohammad's side. He helped Mohammad to his feet, and together they cautiously made their way back to Mohammad's home.

There is an enormous swelling, a hernia, on Mohammad's abdomen caused by the beating and kicking he suffered. But the scars of the greatest pain he felt that day will stay with him forever. When he returned home, he found his dear wife slumped in a heap on the floor and many of their possessions thrown all about the room. Israeli border guards had broken down the door of their home, and after destroying the room, battered and bludgeoned his wife senseless.

After 30 years of marriage, Mohammad and his 48-year-old wife are very close—they are devoted to each other. As of this writing, she is still in the hospital. Although her physical injuries may heal, Mohammad is afraid that her vacant, staring eyes reveal a wound deeper than even his tender devotion can heal. Along with his grief, Mohammad will also believe himself guilty until the end of his days for not being there when his wife needed him.

In the quiet, predawn hours of April 13, the notoriously brutal Israeli border guards entered the village of Nahhaleen in the West Bank, supposedly to conduct a routine search-and-arrest operation. The events that followed left five dead, 103 wounded, and added another chapter to the tragic litany of oppression and massacres that has been the contemporary history of the Palestinian people.

As usual, the Israeli government's official version of events was carefully calculated to give the impression that its combatants' conduct was somehow justified. But on a recent visit to the village the authors examined physical evidence that revealed otherwise. Verbal exchanges between the troops involved and villagers in the days preceding the massacre leave no doubt that the slaughter was clearly premeditated and intentional.

For at least a week before the incident, combined foot and mobile patrols of the Israeli army and border guards had added a new item to their repertoire of harassing tactics. In addition to the constant

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identification checks and gratuitous violence imposed upon youths and others, the troops began to verbally abuse the villagers, especially the girls and women. On at least three occasions per day, for about an hour each time, the mobile units circulated throughout the village, and used a loudspeaker and particularly offensive profanity to call out obscenely as they slowly drove through the village streets.

Two days before the massacre, a jeep stopped at the entrance to the village and called out to people in the street. The soldiers in the jeep made lewd remarks to the women and racial slurs about the Arab people in general. The Israelis realized that tempers would fray easily after days of *Ramadhan* fasting to begin with, and the nature of their comments were coldly calculated to provoke the people of Nahhaleen. On April 11, a Swiss journalist was visiting the village and heard the troops calling over a loudspeaker, "We are busy now, but we will come back to shoot all of you."

On April 12, the evening before the massacre, the troops again came to the village and increased the provocation when one of the soldiers, standing on the seat of his jeep, bared himself by pulling down his clothing to his ankles. Over the loudspeaker he called to Nahhaleen men to bring their wives, daughters, and sisters for him to "service." The comments and crude remarks continued for a time, until older villagers pelted the troops with stones. As they departed, one of the soldiers called over the loudspeaker, "We will come back and kill at least 40 of you."

At about 1:30 a.m. the following morning, a jeep entered the village but did not engage in any activity. The villagers ignored it. But again at 4:30 a.m., several jeeps entered the village. Residents were preparing the predawn *Ramadhan* meal and some were finishing prayers at the village mosque. The jeeps moved quickly and silently through the streets, leaving a few soldiers here and a few there.

The operation began when all the troops started firing simultaneously from their various placements around the village. Residents report that this sudden burst of gunfire caused many to panic. The area seemed to be surrounded, and with bullets flying in all directions, many believed that everyone in the village would die that day. As people looked from their windows they saw friends and family members beaten and they saw troops firing at everyone, even at houses, and people leaving the mosque. Some troops threw large stones through car windows, and all the while they continued screaming over their loudspeakers. The scene was utter chaos. When women ran from their homes to help neighbors or family, they too were viciously beaten. The young men and youths of Nahhaleen did what they knew they must. Five died as they tried to protect their families and homes.

Fuad Najara, 15, was the first to fall. Normally a shy introspective youth, in recent days he had been enraged by the troops' obscenities. His teacher told us he was an excellent student looking forward to a promising college career.

He and his family had been sharing their *Ramadhan* meal when the firing began. Both he and his sister ran toward the window and saw Israeli troops beating a woman neighbor in the street. Fuad went to put on his shoes, his sister explained, and as he raced for the door, grabbed his slingshot and ran. But at the doorway he paused and turned to face his sister. She was about to cry out, but held back when she saw the anger flashing in his eyes, knowing it was useless to plead. He gently touched her arm, as if to say, "Don't worry" or "I love you" or all the thousands of endearments such a gesture means between two people. Fuad turned back to the door, stepped from their home and was gone from her life—forever.

They found Fuad in the cemetery. Even in death, his David's hand clutched the slingshot he had made, his personal symbol of defiance and freedom, so tightly that the doctor finally had to cut the string away. His sister kept it, and just before they lay him to rest, placed it over his heart.

Neighbors witnessed a sniper who stalked Fuad where he had stood confronting many soldiers in the street across from the cemetery. One after another, like hail, he sent

Roadblock at Nahhaleen's main entrance. A Palestinian journalist from the Bethlehem area is shown in the picture.

the stones sailing high overhead to fall upon the troops, trying to divert the soldiers from the people they were attacking. Children screamed from their windows for help, the mosque loudspeakers were blaring out a warning and villagers were racing in all directions to escape the gunfire.

Fuad added to the clamor, shouting at the Israelis that he was unafraid and would be free. The troops were firing as they weaved and ducked the barrage of Fuad's stones, arcing high overhead and finding their mark again and again. Some of his friends shouted from their hiding places, "Fuad, watch out! Behind you!" But the gunfire was too loud for him to hear. The boys watched helplessly as the sniper crept closer and closer. They were screaming now, "Fuad! Fuad!" as they watched the soldier take careful aim and shoot the boy

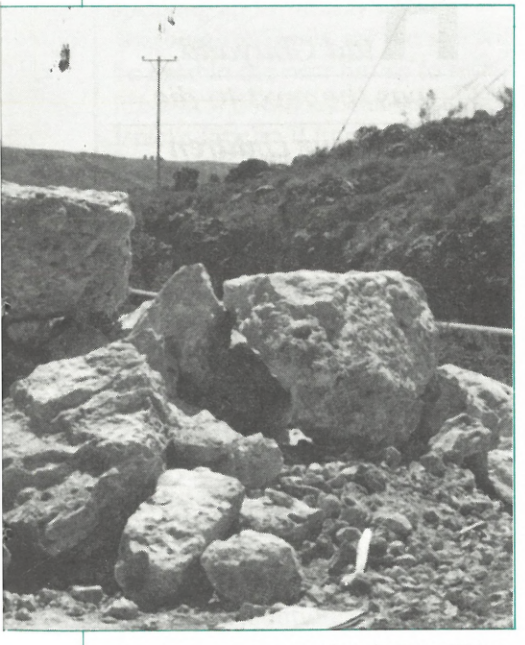


photo by Karen White

through the head. He fell. The killer, moving out into the open, smiled and gave a little jump in self-congratulation on his excellent marksmanship.

Riad Ghayada, 27, was the next to die. He left four children behind. His son is handicapped and Riad had worked hard, using all the money at his disposal to pay for his son's special education. He also had been shot through the head by the border guards. His littler girl, since his death, has exhibited seriously disturbed behavior.

Another littler girl left behind is two-month-old Abeer. But unlike Riad Ghayada's daughter, she will never have a chance to know her father at all. **Mohammad Hassan Khalili Shakarna was 23 years old** and Abeer was his first child. His widow cradles Abeer in her arms as the baby smiles and reaches up to her mother's face. The child is ignored. Like so many other women in Nahhaleen, the young widow's eyes are empty, vacant as she stares beyond us. But there is fear there. Not of soldiers or beatings or death. But of emptiness. A fear of the future, empty and stark. She gazes down at her baby and a smile tugs at the corners of her mouth. But the eyes remain empty.

The events that followed left five dead, 103 wounded, and added another chapter to the tragic litany of oppression and massacres that has been the contemporary history of the Palestinian people.

Mahmoud Shakarna bled to death where he lay in the street. He was shot in the upper chest when he finished his morning prayers and walked from the mosque to return home. Several people attempted to rescue the man and were gunned down by snipers concealed in the dark shadows of surrounding buildings. As he lay dying in the street, his life ebbing away, his brother **Kamal was racing through the streets with a child in his arms.** Their niece was bleeding badly, shot by one of the Israelis in another part of the village. Kamal managed to place the child in a car, jumped behind the wheel, and was tearing down the street toward the roadblock. He made a desperate bid to break through the blockade with the unconscious and heavily bleeding child beside him. As he crashed through the military barricade, a bullet ripped into the back of his skull and the car careened to a halt.

The *shebab* had spirited the bodies of Riad and Fuad out of Nahhaleen, and to the neighboring village of Hawsan. Two graves were hastily dug. Everyone knew it would be just a matter of time until the military troops discovered their intentions, so people moved quickly. Many people from Nahhaleen, to avoid the military, had walked over the hills separating their village from Hawsan several kilometers away. Together, the residents of the two villages would bury their children.

When the military arrived, the *shebab* were ready. For many desperate minutes the youths exchanged their stones for bullets with the kind of ferocious anger that is borne of grief. Of their number, Walid would die that day.

The young men confronted the military as it entered Hawsan village in a desperate attempt to give the older villagers and children attending the funeral a chance to disappear into the surrounding village homes and safety. Many were wounded by gunfire or beatings as the people of the two neighboring villages fought side-by-side.

Nahhaleen's older residents are very proud of their youths. The youths' behavior today reminds them of another tragedy that occurred during their own youth, in April of 1954, when six villagers died in a similar incident at the hands of the Israeli military.

Nahhaleen in 1954 was a more prosperous village. Eighty percent of its residents worked the fertile land of their forefathers. Their sweat and toil produced an abundant life and they were happy.

But Nahhaleen was an impediment to the Israeli conquest of the land, positioned strategically adjacent to the "green line" and on rich farm land. In 1954, the people of Nahhaleen fled in fear of massacre, the Israeli violence had shocked these gentle, rural people whose culture of tolerance, cooperation, and hospitality could not prepare them for a reality of brutal conquest. Over the following years, those who had remained behind watched sadly as more and more of their land was confiscated until virtually nothing was left.

With the onset of the Israeli occupation in 1967 they watched as more and more Israeli settlers surrounded them. They had no heart to work for these interlopers who had taken their land and then offered them a pittance to cultivate the soil they had inherited from their fathers. Many Nahhaleen villagers went to work in factories in Israel.

Today, Nahhaleen has a population of 3,500 people. Four Israeli settlements surround the tiny village: Hadar Betar to the north, Asoun to the southeast, Ofrat to the east, and in the southwest, the Gebout settlement. Villagers have had few pleasant exchanges with the settlers, among whom are a large number of the fanatic, *Eretz Israel* or "Land of Israel" ideologues.

What is left of Nahhaleen's economic base rests on shared labor in a small agricultural community. It should not be enough to keep the village afloat financially, according to Israel's design. Like elsewhere in occupied rural Palestine, however, the abrupt shearing away of Nahhaleen's economic and social base did not result in the society's eventual collapse, as planned—as it will not succeed in quelling today's *Intifadah*.

As have other Palestinian villages, Nahhaleen has produced men and women of courage who faced the occupation and fell. Prior to the *Intifadah*, two villagers died for their activities, one of them from injuries he received during a violent prison interrogation. Two people were expelled in the early 1980s, and since the onset of the *Intifadah*, more than 30 villagers have been imprisoned.

Nahhaleen has certainly changed, but not in the way Israel would like. The people are not afraid, as one banner in the village proclaims. They will continue in the way of the *Intifadah*, it says. But all of the conditions that made the tragedy at Nahhaleen a virtual certainty still exist.

Decentralized decisionmaking still rests with junior military officers in the field. Nahhaleen sits on a secondary road infrequently traveled by tourist or commercial traffic. Like other small villages, it is isolated and far from the larger population centers, leaving it vulnerable to the fanatic settlers living nearby. Finally, a large number of village men, working in Israel, are absent from the village for extended periods of time. And with the sharp increase in settler violence and the brutality of the Israeli military, a potent collection of explosive ingredients is just waiting to cause future tragedies in occupied Palestine. □

photo by Karen White

Banners displayed on the fence surrounding the school at Nahhaleen. The school was the site where condolences were being offered to the families of the martyrs.

Riad Ghayada, 27, was the next to die. He left four children behind. His son is handicapped and Riad had worked hard, using all the money at his disposal to pay for his son's special education.

ISRAEL'S FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Israel Violates U.S. Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986: Ties with South Africa are Thriving

Jane Hunter

On the South African coast near Cape Town, at a place called Arniston, a missile test site is being prepared. Officials of U.S. intelligence agencies, which spotted the test site, say it is identical to the site in the Negev Desert from which Israel launched a satellite into space last September.

These same intelligence officials, speaking anonymously to the *Washington Times*, say the site will be used in the near future to test-fire a new South African version of Israel's Jericho-II intermediate-range ballistic missile which is capable of carrying nuclear weapons. Israel is reportedly helping South Africa with the test. The officials also believe that South Africa will use its new missile, as Israel did, to launch surveillance satellites into space.

The U.S. government, which has been making vigorous efforts to halt the spread of missile technology, has made no demonstrable moves to stand in Israel's way, although the transfer of the missile to South Africa was mentioned in the Israeli press as long ago as November 1987. The United States is simply positioning satellites and naval formations "to ensure close monitoring of the test," according to *The Guardian* of London.

It is also hard to understand why this transfer, the latest and certainly among the most egregious in a stream of major weapons deals Israel has made with South Africa since 1976, has not caused anyone to challenge Israel's claim that it is phasing out its military cooperation with the white minority regime.

News reports, not denied by the Israeli government, assessed the value of Israel's military commerce with South Africa at between $400 and $800 million a year.

In March 1987, the Israeli Cabinet announced that Israel would sign no new arms sales contracts with South Africa and would let its existing contracts expire. But that is because Israel was under pressure at the time. Section 508 of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986 called for the president to submit a report to Congress detailing the ways in which U.S. allies were undermining U.S. policy by violating the 1977 U.N. arms embargo against South Africa.

On Capitol Hill, Section 508 was widely referred to as "the Israel amendment" because everyone knew that Israel was the most flagrant violator of the arms embargo. Even if they refrained from acknowledging it, members of Congress were well aware that Israel had helped South Africa test a nuclear weapon in 1979, had upgraded the white regime's *Mirage* into a modern aircraft called the *Cheetah*, and had helped Pretoria establish its own arms industry with constant infusions of technology in exchange for South African investment in Israeli research and development.

Israel was also the only nation likely to be penalized under Section 508, which tells Congress to consider cutting off aid to allies found selling arms to South Africa. Some members of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) were preparing to raise the issue of Israel's military links with South Africa as soon as the White House issued its report.

Alarmed at the damage that public debate on this inflammatory issue would do to black-Jewish relations, U.S. Jewish leaders were urging the Israeli government to jettison its military cooperation with the white regime. Initially, Israel rebuffed their pleas, arguing that an abrupt suspension could leave Israel $500 million out of pocket and facing lawsuits for hundreds of millions of dollars. News reports, not denied by the Israeli government, assessed the value of Israel's military commerce with South Africa at between $400 and $800 million a year. Declared two-way trade, which includes neither military items nor dia-

Jane Hunter is editor of the monthly publication Israeli Foreign Affairs.

monds, amounts to about $200 million a year. Then, on March 18, 1987, only days before the White House was to issue its report, the Israeli government announced that Israel would sign no new arms sales contracts with South Africa and would let its existing contracts expire.

Critics pointed out that Israel's refusal to describe the contracts and their duration made its promise to let them expire all but meaningless. Moreover, there were reports in the Israeli press that Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin had visited South Africa the previous January and signed new contracts there good until the end of the century. Nonetheless, on the strength of the new Israeli position, several days before the report was issued—it was classified, but a public summary did identify Israel as a prime violator of the arms embargo—white liberal members of Congress and pro-Israel lobbyists succeeded in talking the CBC out of taking action against Israel.

Critics did not have long to wait for evidence that Israel had only taken action against the CBC, not against South Africa. In August 1987, Israel unexpectedly canceled the *Lavi* aircraft, which had, until then, been regarded as the central focus of its arms industry. Three months later, an Italian daily, *Il Giornale*, reported that Israel and South Africa had secretly agreed to produce a South African version of the *Lavi*. Subsequently, South Africa's heavily censored media confirmed that a new aircraft—"a *Lavi* look alike," said some experts—was under development.

South Africa also hired many of the *Lavi* technicians who lost their jobs when the project was canceled. They performed an additional upgrade on the *Cheetah* and are expected to work on the South African *Lavi*. Using its new aircraft in combination with at least two *Boeing 707*s, purchased from Israel, which converted them into inflight refueling/electronic warfare platforms, South Africa can extend its cross-border attacks to much of southern Africa.

While Tadiran's probable supply of its wares, military electronics equipment, to the apartheid state certainly constitutes a grave crime against the black majority in South Africa, it is hardly of equal magnitude to Israel's provision of missiles, nuclear weapons and satellites to the white regime.

News of the *Lavi* transfer dismayed some members of the CBC, who recalled during a March 1988 meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir that the United States had invested $1.5 billion in the development of the aircraft. In a letter they handed Shamir, the CBC called the transfer "an unconscionable use of our aid." The letter also called on Israel to end all its military sales to South Africa, stating "Your policy of signing no new military contracts with South Africa is woefully inadequate because of the considerable number of existing contracts that you will continue to fulfill."

When CBC member Rep. Ronald Dellums asked Shamir if those contracts were open-ended, Shamir replied that most were not. The implications of that word "most" became clearer in June 1988, when the *Jerusalem Post* revealed that finance ministry officials were to go to South Africa to negotiate the renewal of an "agreement which requests mutual consultations every two years." The paper quoted the South African desk officer at Israel's foreign ministry, who said that "the meeting in Pretoria is not intended to extend the agreement which is not limited in its time-span." In 1976, during a visit of then South African Prime Minister John Vorster to Israel, Israel and South Africa signed a series of military and economic agreements and established a bilateral commission to consult regularly on their execution.

Such a master agreement might cover any need that arises, such as the Israeli advisers, veterans of the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, who went to the aid of the South African Air Force as it attacked Angola in late 1987. It might also have covered the on-the-spot lessons in suppression received by South African military officers, observed near Ramallah, on the West Bank, in September 1988. For years, Israel has sent regular rotations of military trainers to South Africa and has assisted South Africa in its attacks on Angola and Mozambique and its occupation of Namibia.

In May this year, a number of British reports indicated that Israel was involved in South Africa's efforts to obtain the technology for the *Bloupipe* shoulder-fired missile

See SOUTH AFRICA *on page 29*

In Brief

Israeli Settlements in Occupied Palestine on the Rise

The daily *Haaretz* has reported that the ministry of finance, headed by Shimon Peres, has asked the Knesset's Finance Committee to appropriate 10 million shekels for settlement purposes in the West Bank and Gaza.

The paper added that the appropriated money will be transferred to the settlement division of the Jewish Agency to be distributed among the settlements of the West Bank and Gaza, as well as to those in the Golan Heights and the Jordan Valley.

The daily *Hadashot* quoted the head of the settlement division as saying that despite the Palestinian *Intifadah*, settlement activity has been on the rise: the number of families that settled in the West Bank increased by 15 percent.

Soldiers Burn 11 Shirts Designed with Colors of Palestinian Flag

Israeli soldiers set fire to 11 shirts bearing the colors of the Palestinian flag which they discovered in a grocery store in Azzoun, near Qalqilyah on July 31.

Troops also forced an 11-year-old boy from Azzoun to take off his flag-decorated sweater and demanded that he tell them where he bought it. Whereupon, the soldiers forced 55-year-old Saleh Ishaq, the retailer who hawked the shirts and sweaters, to open up his store and fork up the merchandise.

Gaza Casualties for July: 16 Killed and 556 Wounded

Sixteen Gazans were shot and killed, and 556 others wounded by Israeli gunfire during July, according to hospital and UNRWA sources. Of the injured, 331 suffered live ammunition wounds and 225 suffered plastic or steel pellet wounds. Another 500 Gazans were treated for beating-inflicted injuries.

The ages of the casualties ranged from 3 to 75 years, while the ages of the fatalities ranged from 12 to 79 years.

Six Palestinians Killed in One Day

On July 10, six Palestinians were killed by Israeli troops or died from previous Israeli-inflicted injuries in the West Bank and Gaza. The victims are—1) Ayman Awadallah Awad, 13, from Rafah. He died in an Israeli hospital from gunshot wounds to the abdomen he sustained three days earlier. 2) Rami Mustafa Al Turaifi, 15, from Al-Bureij refugee camp, Gaza. He died from a bullet wound to the heart. 3) Raja Mohammad Saleh, 16, of Naaleen, near Ramallah. He was killed in a clash with Israeli soldiers in Beitunia. 4) Mahyoub Moussa Khalil, 18, of Abu Falah, near Ramallah. He died from bullet wounds he received during an Israeli army raid two days earlier. 5) Yasser Mohammad Abu-Ghosh, 17, of Beitunia. Israeli intelligence officers in civilian clothes gunned him down in broad daylight in Ramallah. He was shot four times in the head and back. 6) Finally, a resident of Hebron was also killed. The Israeli army announced that the man, whose name and age were not divulged, had been wanted for a long time.

Figures on Death and Destruction Due to Israeli Attempts to Quell the *Intifadah*

The Israeli Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories said that 486 Palestinians were killed and 6,912 wounded between December 9, 1987, the beginning of the *Intifadah*, and July 4. Israeli army sources admit to only 417. The Associated Press, however, sets the figure at 482. According to the Israeli army, 236 Palestinians were killed and 4,650 wounded in the West Bank. The figures for the Gaza Strip are 154 and 2,261, respectively.

The Israeli Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories reports that of the 486 Palestinians who have been killed by Israeli soldiers and settlers, 452 died of live or plastic bullet wounds. Of those, 21 were children under 12 years of age and 71 of them were 12 to 16 years of age. The Center also declared that 32 other Palestinians died of other means, such as beatings, clubbings, and electrocutions. There were no figures on Palestinian fatalities from tear gas.

At least 70 Palestinians were also killed in retribution for collaborating with the Israeli occupation authorities.

During the same period, according to Israeli army figures, seven soldiers died and 778 were wounded. In addition, nine Jewish settlers died and 601 others were wounded in the West Bank. In Gaza, there were no Israeli fatalities, but 477 soldiers and 53 settlers were injured.

The Israeli army also demolished 160 houses and sealed 68 in the West Bank. It demolished another 67 and sealed another 34 in the Gaza Strip.

Since the start of the *Intifadah*, 53 Palestinians have been expelled. Another 8,355 have been detained. Of them, 1,766 have been tried. There are 1,815 administrative detainees.

4,000 *Intifadah* Incidents in Jerusalem in First Half of 1989

During the first six months of 1989 there were around 4,000 *Intifadah*-related incidents in East Jerusalem, according to an Israeli police report submitted to the Knesset's Interior Committee, *Al-Hamishmar* reported on July 5.

During the same period, 562 Israeli vehicles were damaged, 70 Molotov cocktails were thrown, and four explosive devices went off along major roads.

Occupation Authorities Extend Closing of Arab Studies Society

The Israeli occupation authorities have extended the closing of the Arab Studies Society by another six months, according to Israel Television.

The Arab Studies Society, a research organization, is run by Faisal Al-Hussaini. It was closed down last summer by the Israeli occupation authorities. When Hussaini arrived at his office on the morning of Sunday July 31, after the initial six-month closing order ended, he found police sealing the office doors with an acetylene torch. Hussaini was handed an extended closing order signed by General Amram Mitzna.

360 Molotov Cocktails Thrown at Border Police in First Half of 1989

The commander of the Israeli border police has reported that 360 Molotov cocktails were thrown at his forces in the first six months of 1989, including 80 in East Jerusalem's suburbs. General Meshulam Amit added that his forces are subjected to no less than 60 firebomb attacks every month.

Amit also disclosed that the border police dealt with 3,160 violent incidents during the same period, and arrested 3,426 youths, 1,000 of whom were on the occupation authorities' wanted list.

The border police shot and killed 11 and wounded 242 Palestinians in the first half of 1989. The number of wounded border police troops totalled 277.

Peres: "Likud Does Not Want Peace"

"The Likud does not want peace," Israeli Labor party leader Shimon Peres told a meeting inaugurating his campaign for the Histadrut elections in late July. Peres added that the persons who preside over the Likud, "are the same persons who objected to peace with Egypt, opposed the pullout of Israeli troops from Lebanon, and killed the Jordanian option."

Peres said that whenever there is "a glimmer of hope that a peace process may begin, the Likud ministers impose restrictions in order to frustrate everything."

Israeli Military to Seek Separate *Intifadah* Budget

According to the Israeli daily *Al-Hamishmar*, Israeli military circles are trying to obtain a separate budget for dealing with the *Intifadah*, independent of the defense budget.

The Israeli government allocated 200 million shekels for the defense budget last July to offset additional costs of reacting to the Palestinian Uprising.

Israelis Join British in Training Right-Wing Colombian Death Squads

Last year, Israeli military trainers working with the contras took time off to go to Colombia, where, along with colleagues from Britain, they trained right-wing paramilitary death squads financed by the Medellin cocaine drug cartel. The trainers' activities were revealed in documents seized during narcotics raids. The death squads have been implicated in numerous massacres of peasants and others they believed to be sympathetic to the left. Over the past several years, Colombia has concluded major weapons deals with Israel.

Peru to Manufacture Israeli *Galil* Assault Rifles

It was recently reported that the Israeli government has licensed Peru's Naval Arms Factory Center to manufacture the internationally popular *Galil* assault rifle. The *Galil*, which is a similar but lighter version of the Soviet-made *Kalashnikov* rifle, has already been licensed for production in South Africa.

—compiled by Michael Hindi

LEGISLATIVE REPORT *from page 26*
to the dialogue, launched an intense campaign to defeat the measure. Some of Israel's closest friends, including Senators Rudy Boschwitz (R-Minnesota), Howard Metzenbaum (D-Ohio), and Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii), joined Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell (D-Maine) and Minority Leader Robert Dole (R-Kansas) in fashioning a compromise measure which prevented negotiations with any PLO representative who had directly participated in the planning or execution of a terrorist activity which resulted in the death or kidnapping of an American citizen.

In back to back roll call votes, the Helms Amendment was defeated 75-23 and the Mitchell/Dole compromise was passed 97-1.

While even the softer language of the compromise amendment cannot be welcomed by those who view the dialogue as the most promising tool available in the struggle to achieve a peaceful settlement to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, it could be viewed as a vote to continue the dialogue, and in that respect a positive development. The fact that fully three quarters of the Senate rejected the opportunity to cast a vote for derailing the dialogue, despite heavy AIPAC lobbying to do so, shows the value that the Senate attributes to talking with the PLO.

Another interesting development was the visible split among the American Jewish groups on the issue of the dialogue. While AIPAC lobbied strongly for the Helms Amendment, the American Jewish Congress and other Jewish groups lobbied against its passage.

In addition, the activist or engaged approach of the White House and the State Department is a clear departure from the passivity and benign neglect displayed by the Reagan administration vis-a-vis the Arab-Israeli conflict. □

SOUTH AFRICA *from page 26*
and had supplied some of the weapons South Africa had traded to Protestant extremist groups in Northern Ireland in exchange for a model of the British-made missile. Perhaps Israel has argued privately to U.S. officials that this effort was underway prior to March 1987. Perhaps no one has asked about it.

In September 1987, again to disarm its critics, Israel announced a number of measures to limit nonmilitary relations with South Africa—and promptly began to violate them. Sports and cultural exchanges and official visits were supposedly out. Yet Amos Mansdorf, Israel's star tennis player, continues to compete in South Africa. And when the *Intifadah* cut deeply into Israel's crucial tourism industry, the Israeli tourism ministry invited a South African government television crew to make a promotional film.

Another "sanction," stopping the use of Israel as "a transit station for South African goods," fell by the wayside when the president of a U.S.-based company, *Air Ground Equipment Sales, Inc.*, with offices in Israel, pleaded guilty recently in federal court in New York to violating the 1986 anti-apartheid law by importing South African *Boeing* aircraft engines through Israel.

Finance was another area covered by the September measures, yet this March the *Jerusalem Post* reported that *Koor*, the giant conglomerate owned by the Israeli labor federation, the Histadrut, had borrowed $80 million from four South African banks. Since 1981, the Histadrut has been issuing statements saying it has cut all ties with South Africa except those involving training programs for black trade unions. (These programs have been condemned by the African National Congress.)

In April, *Ha'aretz*, Israel's leading daily paper, reported that top *Koor* officials had attended a meeting in South Africa of the board of directors of *Iskoor*, an Israel-based company that makes military and civilian products out of South African steel. *Iskoor* was established in 1973 under the joint ownership of *Koor* and *Iscor*, the South African government-owned *Iron and Steel Corporation*. Since 1987, Israel and South Africa have been trying to hide *Iskoor*'s ownership behind shell companies.

This quest for secrecy has been given added urgency by the persistent efforts of a group of anti-apartheid and peace activists to force Tallahassee, Florida to cancel a contract for a *Koor* subsidiary, *Tadiran*, to build radios for the U.S. Army in a city-subsidized factory in partnership with *General Dynamics*. After the activists found listings for *Tadiran* in the Johannesburg telephone directory, a worried Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin discussed the situation with officials at the Pentagon.

Soon after those discussions, the Tallahassee activists assisted by the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law brought the situation to the attention of Representative Dellums, author of anti-apartheid legislation now before Congress and current chair of the CBC. On June 8, Dellums wrote to Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney, asking him about "the propriety of DOD's [the Department of Defense] awarding a contract to *Tadiran, Inc.*" and asking "if your office would look into whether *Tadiran* did violate U.S. law by selling arms to South Africa."

While *Tadiran*'s probable supply of its wares, military electronics equipment, to the apartheid state certainly constitutes a grave crime against the black majority in South Africa, it is hardly of equal magnitude to Israel's provision of missiles, nuclear weapons and satellites to the white regime. Yet the comparison is instructive in another way, demonstrating, as it does, that, at least in the United States, when citizens protest Israel's lawless activity and demand that their country's policies be enforced, officials are obliged to take notice.□

The Secret Life of Saeed, The Ill-Fated Pessoptimist: A Palestinian Who Became a Citizen of Israel

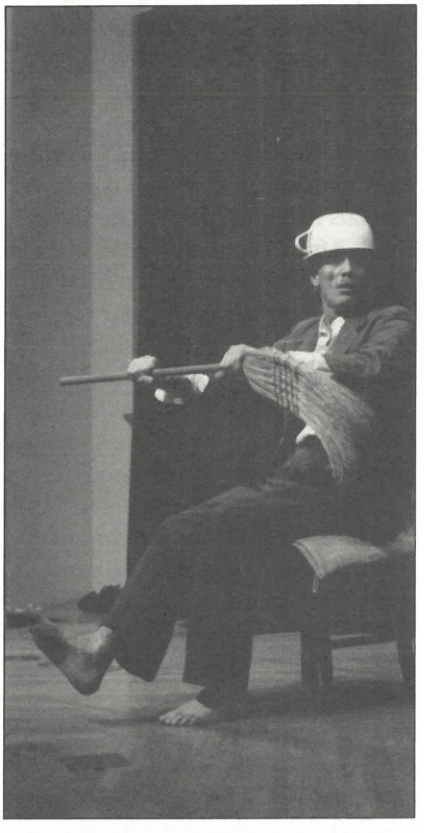
Suha Sabbagh

Based on Emile Habiby's novel by the same title, *The Secret Life of Saeed, The Ill-Fated Pessoptimist: A Palestinian Who Became a Citizen of Israel*, is a play which successfully conveys the Palestinian experience in the State of Israel (inside the "green line") since 1948. The novel is acclaimed as one of the most original literary works to emerge from the Arab World within the last decade. The cast for this newly adapted play consists of one: the famous Palestinian actor, Mohammad Bakri. The American Palestinian Youth Organization, ROOTS, organized and sponsored the play's recent U.S. tour.

While remaining faithful to the plot, to the use of the Palestinian dialect, and to the spirit of the tragicomedy in Habiby's novel, Bakri incorporates rural songs, idioms, phrases, proverbs, and jokes that draw the audience and the performer together on the background of their shared cultural and political experiences. Familiar songs, sung in rural areas before 1948 in which the audience is asked to participate, bring Palestine back to life, even as the dialogue describes the destruction of Palestinian villages and the dispersal of the Palestinian people.

Like two conflicting musical notes, Saeed's personal and familiar songs, idioms, and jokes reassure the audience of continuity with a Palestinian past, while the plot describes the anxiety of a comic figure, anti-hero, Saeed, a Palestinian caught in the whirlwind of Israeli rule. The tension between Saeed's personal appeal and the plot deepens Saeed's character.

Emile Habiby has experienced firsthand the social and political conditions that regulate the lives of Palestinians living in the Jewish state. A resident of Haifa, born in 1919, he was elected three times to the Israeli Knesset as a representative of the Communist party. He is also the editor-in-chief of a biweekly newspaper, *Al-Ittihad*, that deals with social and political issues pertaining to the Arabs in Israel.



Palestinian actor Mohammad Bakri in Emile Habiby's one-man play, *The Pessoptimist.*

photo by Laila Jammal

The collection of stories that first won him acclaim in the Arab World was *Stories of the Six Days* (1969). It was followed by *The Pessoptimist* (1974) which established his reputation as one of the most original literary figures currently publishing in Arabic.

The importance of this work lies not only in his political message but in his creativity as a writer. While most Palestinian writers choose realism to convey their messages, Habiby combines sarcasm, farce, and absurdity to convey Saeed's experience. Saeed strongly resembles Juha, a wise fool in Arabic folklore known for his ability to survive through a degree of cunning. More recently, Habiby has published a novel entitled *Khtaya* in which he experiments with the stream of consciousness technique and flashbacks to establish the relation between present and past.

The word "pessoptimist" is a composite of the two words "pessimist" and "optimist." It describes the schizophrenic condition of Palestinians within the 1948 borders who, while aware of their dismal situation, must deny that reality and claim optimism in

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order perhaps to be able to continue to function.

The Role of Women

Since women in Emile Habiby's work represent hope and resistance, it is not surprising that the person who best embodies optimism in the face of the worst calamities, like the accidental death of her son, is Saeed's mother. However, Habiby chooses to ridicule the attitude that there is always a silver lining behind every cloud. Through the mother, he criticizes Palestinian unwillingness to face the real status of living in Israel, choosing instead to live a lie, much in the style of Voltaire's *Candide*.

While the older generation of women symbolizes superstition and the refusal to take responsibility for the course of events that led to the 1948 disaster, younger women are imbued with incredible courage, a sense of national responsibility, and the power to transform the society around them. The cast of one does not prevent the actor and the script from conveying the importance of the role of women. From Saeed's monologue we learn how two women, first Yuaad ("To Be Returned") and then Baqiyya, ("She Who Has Remained"), have shaped Saeed's life and the future of his son, Walaa—loyal.

Yuaad and Saeed met on the train between Haifa and Acre where they both attended school. Yuaad asked him the meaning of an English word and when he failed to explain it, she did so herself and then asked him to sit next to her. But their relationship was not to last. First traditional values, and then Zionism conspired to take her away from him, regulating both their lives. When the school principal and Yuaad's father learn that the two sit next to each other on the train, Yuaad is withdrawn from school, but not before the author has the opportunity to ridicule the arguments presented by both in support of their action. In 1948, yet another barrier comes between the

The novel is acclaimed as one of the most original literary works to emerge from the Arab World within the last decade.

two lovers: this time it is the borders of the State of Israel. On more than one occasion Habiby shows that reactionary Arab values and Zionism sometimes functioned in similar ways.

As her name implies, Yuaad sneaks into Israel and goes back to Haifa to look for her missing father, sister, and Saeed. In her search to be reunited with her loved ones and the land of her birth, she shows courage, incentive, and a lot of spunk. The soldiers who seek to expel her, bringing about her second separation from Saeed, are subjected to her bites, kicks, and screams. In contrast, Saeed's attempts to find Yuaad are more acquiescent to the Israeli authorities: he asks them to look for her and, in return, Saeed works as an informer in the Communist party and defeats its members in the next election. Her courage is repeated by cycles of Yuaads all of whom continue to infiltrate the country seeking to be reunited with the land and its people.

Baqiyya, Saeed's second love and his wife, is the guardian of an ancient secret that leads to the discovery of a treasure hidden in the caves beside the sea and left behind by her ancestors. The treasure, also containing guns, is discovered by her son Walaa, a freedom fighter or *fedayee*. In one of the most moving scenes, Walaa's mother Baqiyya, is brought to the caves by the Israeli authorities to persuade her son to give himself up But instead, mother and son march together into the sea and are engulfed by the waves. Mothers are that generation that keeps alive the memory of Palestine and encourages the resistance of the young generation.

Habiby also credits women with instilling the spirit of resistance in the next generation. Baqiyya's treasure, her memory of Palestine, radicalizes her son while Saeed's first love, Yuaad, insures that the future generations will continue to return to the land of Palestine. Yet, Yuaad and Baqiyya remain metaphors rather than real and fully rounded characters. Compared with the multi-dimensional character of Saeed who is a sage and a fool, an informer and yet a victim, the female characters are there to represent the Palestinian struggle as if their own existence is secondary to their symbolic meaning in the play. This interpretation of the role of women is not unique to Habiby's work, Palestinian poetry is replete with examples, wherein women quickly become symbols for the land and its bountiful giving. While the symbolic association with the female is almost always positive, women are still dealt with as symbols and not as equal partners to male characters capable of both good and bad.

Mohammad Bakri tried, with some success, to overcome this problem by providing an alternative view of women through anecdotes, popular songs, and current jokes.

However, the strength of Bakri's performance lies in his ability to sustain the interest of the audience and maintain an emotionally charged atmosphere throughout the play. Bakri is the leading Palestinian actor in Israel. Besides acting in the full length feature, *Hanna K.*, and in *Beyond the Walls*, a film about Palestinians in an Israeli prison, Mohammad Bakri has acted in numerous plays and films. And in this one-man show, with very little in the way of props and no help from supporting actors, we see his talents shining in the limelight. □

BOOK REVIEW

My Enemy, My Self

Gail Pressberg

My Enemy, My Self, Yoram Binur. Doubleday, 1989. $18.95

Since the *Intifadah* began, intensive news coverage of events in the West Bank and Gaza Strip has given the world a disturbing look into a situation long held to be untenable by most Palestinians, especially those living under occupation. Front-page headlines have reported mounting death tolls and the growing numbers of Palestinian wounded. Yet, very little has been written on the daily life of ordinary Palestinians.

Yoram Binur's *My Enemy, My Self* offers a unique perspective on the headlines of Israel's occupation, but also, it penetrates the emotional complexities at the heart of the Palestinian Uprising.

In 1984, Binur worked as a reporter for *Kol Ha'ir* ("Voice of the City"), a Hebrew-language weekly. However, his fluency in Arabic, enabled Binur to "listen in"—it allowed him to see the Palestinians as an insider. And he watched and listened as the Palestinian people coped with the burdens of occupation.

The more he interacted with the Palestinians, the more fluent he became in speaking Arabic. He also began to take on Palestinian mannerisms and gestures, and he learned all about Palestinian culture. As he was reporting, Palestinians often mistook him for one of their own, and he realized that he could pass as a Palestinian by living and working as a Palestinian.

Binur's My Enemy, My Self chronicles the wretched treatment Israelis mete out to Palestinians.

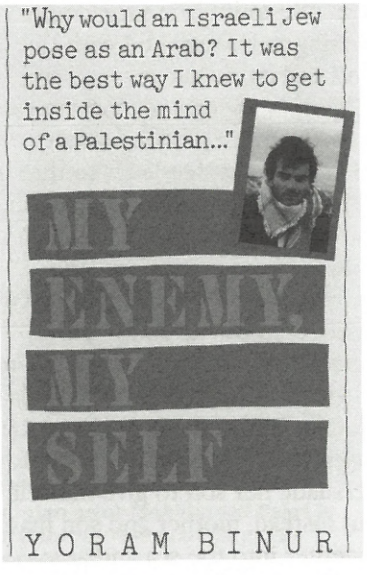
Hence, to offer a new perspective to the Israeli reader on Israel's relationship to the Palestinians as occupier, Binur set out to write a Middle Eastern version of Grace Halsell's, *Black Like Me*. As with *Black Like Me*, the author is a member of the the oppressive race, and he uses his ethnic identity as a means to gain an audience and tell the story of those who are oppressed.

However, before embarking on this unusual endeavor, Binur needed credentials from a trusted Palestinian leader. Should the Palestinians ever discover that he was an Israeli, they would immediately suspect him of being a spy for the Israeli military or the Shin Beth, the Israeli secret police. So he consulted with Faisal Hussaini, director of the Israeli-closed Arab Studies Society in East Jerusalem.

Hussaini, convinced of both Binur's sincerity and the need for a credible book to be written by an Israeli for Israelis about the horrors of occupation, gives him a letter asking that all possible assistance be afforded Binur because of the importance of his unusual journalistic undertaking. Binur then sets out to live the life of a Palestinian laborer.

Binur's *My Enemy, My Self* chronicles the wretched treatment Israelis mete out to Palestinians.

One of his first acts as a Pales-


"Why would an Israeli Jew pose as an Arab? It was the best way I knew to get inside the mind of a Palestinian..."
MY ENEMY, MY SELF
YORAM BINUR

Gail Pressberg is the executive director of the Foundation for Middle East Peace.

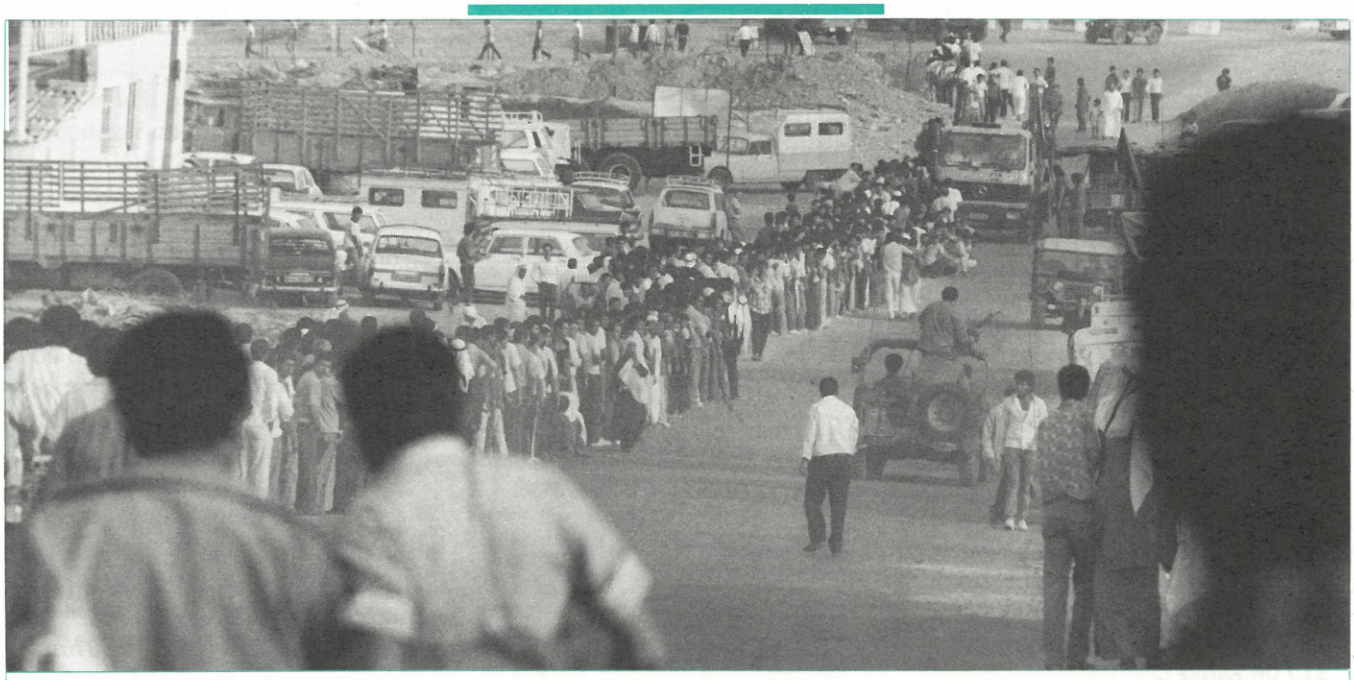


photo by Rick Reinhard

Palestinians lining up for identity card inspections by Israeli troops, one of the many humiliating acts imposed upon Palestinians.

tinian laborer is to look for work on Tel Aviv's Yefet Street, well known as the "slave labor" market. There he witnesses Palestinian children signing up to be day laborers for measly wages, and he sees the Israeli bosses harassing the Palestinian workers.

Binur reveals the difficulties and indignities of being a Palestinian worker in Israel. He describes the grim living conditions, the squalor, of workers who spend the night illegally.

As he labors in a variety of menial jobs—waiter, factory worker, etc.—Binur is occasionally treated with paternalistic kindness by his Israeli bosses, but he is never treated as an equal. Most of the time he works in conditions unacceptable to Israeli workers. In addition, he is constantly in danger of being picked up and arrested by the police.

In one anecdote in the book, even the condescending paternalistic attitudes evaporate when newspaper headlines report a violent act committed by a Palestinian. A watchful scorn, a look of warning, possesses Binur's employer's face, lest Binur, the Palestinian worker, create any problems.

Another indictment of poor Palestinian working conditions is made as Binur describes the low wages and lack of benefits Palestinians must endure. (In fact, *Al-Haq*, the Palestinian human rights organization based in Ramallah, reports that the Israeli government withholds money for benefits from the already low paycheck of Palestinian workers. But the Palestinian laborers never see any benefits.)

Binur also offers a glimpse of Israeli prison conditions as Binur, who takes the name Fathi Awad as his cover, talks with his fellow workers. When he asks Thair, a worker from Gaza and one of his roommates, about prison and interrogation, Thair tells Binur—

"It's nothing . . . . They kept a sack over my head for some hours and then beat me and asked me questions. I didn't admit a thing."

Binur, as Fathi Awad, reveals many aspects of Palestinian life: other indignities of occupation, Palestinian male attitudes toward women, and the bitter contrast in Tel Aviv between Israeli Jewish lifestyles and the lifestyle of the Palestinian laborer. All of this, he does eloquently, thoughtfully, and sensitively.

Much as *Black Like Me* was required reading in the United States for white people trying to comprehend the evils of racism, *My Enemy, My Self* is required reading for all those trying to get an appreciation for and understanding of the conditions which made the *Intifadah* inevitable. *My Enemy, My Self* is an easy, authentic and empathetic read. □

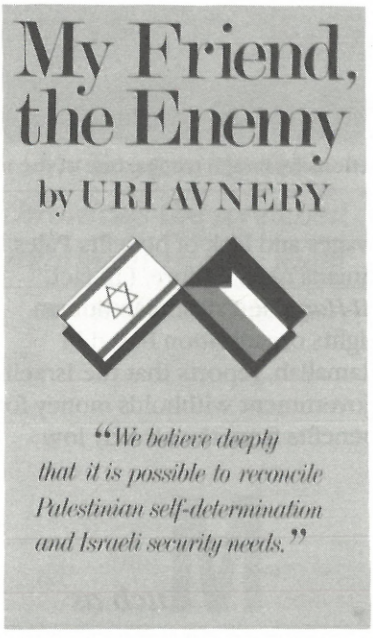
Much as Black Like Me *was required reading in the United States for white people trying to comprehend the evils of racism,* My Enemy, My Self *is required reading for all those trying to get an appreciation for and understanding of the conditions which made the* Intifadah *inevitable.*

BOOK REVIEW

Uri Avneri's My Friend, The Enemy

Antony T. Sullivan

MY FRIEND, THE ENEMY, Uri Avneri. Lawrence Hill and Company: Westport, Connecticut, 1987. 335 pages. Index to p. 340. $12.95 paper.


My Friend, the Enemy
by URI AVNERY
"We believe deeply that it is possible to reconcile Palestinian self-determination and Israeli security needs."

An immigrant to Palestine from Germany in 1933, Uri Avneri served as an Irgun cadre from 1938-1941 and was wounded while fighting in an Israeli commando unit during the 1948 Arab Israeli war. Subsequently, he was elected to three terms in the Knesset and became a founding member of both the Sheli party and the Progressive List for Peace. For four decades Avneri has been associated with the weekly magazine *Haolem Hazeh ("This World")* which has consistently advocated a two-state solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, as well as some sort of Semitic confederation of the indigenous peoples of the Middle East. By background, experience, and commitment, Avneri is ideally suited to have been a pioneer in the Palestinian Israeli dialogue of the past 15 years. That dialogue, with all its drama, frustrations, and increasing promise, is the subject of this fascinating memoir.

Always, Avneri has kept in mind his own past as a freedom fighter in his own eyes, and a terrorist in the eyes of the British and Arabs in Palestine. While in the Irgun, he attacked English police, burned government offices and placed bombs in "crowded Arab markets." Avneri believes that his years as a guerrilla were essential to his understanding of the Palestinian *fedayeen* today. "Whenever I ask myself how young Palestinians will react," he writes, "I try to imagine myself as I was when I was 16 years old. How would I have felt? What would I have done?" Moreover, Avneri has never forgotten his role in the 1948 expulsion of Palestinians. Meditation on his contributions to a decade of military violence has left Avneri convinced of the human tragedy of war, and ever mindful that "refugees are people . . . not just a problem."

In late 1973, Said Hammami, PLO representative in England, published two articles in *The Times* of London proposing that a Palestinian state be established in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which would recognize Israel. "It is no small thing for a people which has been wronged," Hammami observed, "to take the first step towards reconciliation for the sake of a just peace." That was the signal that Avneri says he had long been awaiting: a prominent Palestinian interlocutor for peace had surfaced.

Most of this book details the exhilarations and disappointments of the few brave men who pioneered a dangerous campaign to enable Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs to coexist in the same land in peace. The campaign was dangerous because the real enemies of peace were many: Israeli, Palestinian, and foreign.

During the many secret meetings which Avneri began with Hammami in early 1975, and continued with Hammami's successor Issam Sartawi after 1977, Avneri took care to explain that he is a Zionist. Only a committed Zionist such as he, Avneri strove to convince his listeners, stood any chance of changing Israeli public opinion, and consequently, Israeli policy. To every Palestinian, Zionism represents an aggressive and exclusivist settler movement responsible for the Palestinian diaspora, and to most Jews, Zionism constitutes the *raison d'être* of the

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Jewish state and is synonymous with Israeli patriotism. This seemingly unbridgeable chasm in viewpoints dogged each step of the Palestinian-Israeli dialogue for the next decade.

Nevertheless, both Avneri and such like-minded colleagues as Mattiyahu Peled and Yaacov Arnon on the one hand, and Hammami, Sartawi, and finally Yasser Arafat on the other, accelerated their common campaign to create a Palestinian-Israeli front for peace. When Jewish-American and Republican leader Rita Hauser embraced Arafat in late 1988 in front of the cameras of *The New York Times*, and the United States announced the opening of its dialogue with the PLO, the peace effort begun by Hammami, Avneri, and Sartawi 13 years earlier had finally scored its first great victory.

In his first meeting with Avneri in January 1975, Hammami stated that peace had to be made by Israelis and Palestinians together, without intervention from either of the superpowers. "Here we [were]," Avneri writes, "two enemies meeting for the first time and we [had] nothing to quarrel about." In future years all those engaged in these discussions would consciously have to remind themselves that they were not in fact friends, but rather enemies.

One of the most dramatic incidents Avneri recounts is a public lecture which he and Sartawi delivered in London on February 27, 1983. Avneri was verbally lacerated by Jewish extremists in the audience, as was Sartawi by Palestinian rejectionists. Sartawi replied with unforgettable eloquence: "If anybody thinks that sissies make peace, [he] is mistaken. Peacemakers are very tough and so help us God if challenged we are going to demonstrate how tough we are. We cannot be scared into abandoning our chosen path, because this path . . . is the moral path, the patriotic path." Today, that path of peace is publicly trodden by most of the international community.

Whenever I ask myself how young Palestinians will react," Avneri writes, "I try to imagine myself as I was when I was 16 years old. How would I have felt? What would I have done?"

Avneri confesses to "inherent sympathy for the United States and the American way of life." However, he maintains that the United States has long refused to rush any comprehensive settlement of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict which would render all of the protagonists less dependent upon it. He holds Henry Kissinger especially responsible for this policy.

Yet, Avneri directs his most vigorous criticism at the Soviet Union and particularly at the way the USSR has used the Israeli Communist party to block moves toward peace. The Communist party in Israel, Avneri says, is "universally hated" because of its pro-Soviet line.

According to Avneri, the Soviets have attempted to torpedo all direct Palestinian-Israeli contacts outside the Communist camp. At the time of the fifteenth Palestine National Council meeting in 1981, the USSR used both a pro-Soviet PLO faction and the Israeli Communist party to block any interaction between non Communist Palestinians and Israelis. Avneri adds that then there was a close connection between the USSR and Abu Nidal. For Avneri, the fact that in 1982 the Soviets did not lift a finger to help the Palestinians in Beirut brands them as hypocrites as well as Machiavellians and abettors of terror.

Especially surprising then is Avneri's lavish praise of Henri Curiel, an expatriate Jewish Egyptian Communist, who, for more than a quarter century, operated one of the world's most sophisticated terrorist support services from his Paris headquarters. Nowhere is the reader told that Curiel almost certainly was an elite KGB agent responsible for an underground apparatus which provided safe-houses, fake papers, and money, in addition to training in explosives and sabotage, to groups ranging from the Irish Republican Army, the German Red Army Faction, the Japanese Red Army, to the Tupamaros.

A strong possibility exists that Curiel recruited his cousin George Bihar into the KGB. Under the name of George Blake, Bihar went on to join British intelligence and pass a wealth of state secrets to the USSR before he was apprehended. Curiel was assassinated on May 4, 1978, and one likely suspect remains the KGB which may have feared that his secret network and past were about to be blown.

Apart from his puzzling assessment of Curiel and an occasional tendency to spotlight his own role, Avneri has succeeded in writing an excellent testament of the ongoing Palestinian-Israeli struggle for peace. His remarkable career both shapes and drives this fascinating book. And in addition to its dramatic value, it is an important source of information about the events leading up to contemporary political developments. □

Final Communiqué Adopted by the Fifth General Congress of Fatah

In a stage deemed one of the most critical in the national liberation struggle of the Palestinian people, and at the climax of the intensifying confrontation between the Palestinian masses and the Israeli occupation forces, which have employed all their resources and means in an attempt to liquidate our national cause, to strike at the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and to usurp its fundamental national rights,

In light of the national *Intifadah* which has bolstered its position in the world's conscience and entered the calculations of the international powers, as a battle for national independence, and which our people is waging alongside the legendary steadfastness of our masses in the Palestinian refugee camps, in defense of their national cause and their existence,

The Fifth Congress of the Fatah Movement was convened in Tunis between August 3 and August 8, 1989, under the patronage of Zein Al-Abideen bin Ali, the President of Tunisia, and in the brotherly hospitality of the people and government of Tunisia.

The proceedings of the Congress were carried out in a democratic atmosphere, reflecting national responsibility, and a comprehensive and responsible dealing with all the issues and problems involving the Palestinian people and its national cause.

The five committees of the Congress debated and analyzed those problems, and searched for the best solutions. The Congress, in light of this debate, passed general resolutions which encompassed all the issues and developments, chief of which is the blessed national *Intifadah*, and means of bolstering and escalating it, as well as organizational and political questions.

The Congress discussed in detail and with great pride the courageous national *Intifadah* of our great people, and its steadfast heroes and wounded, and blessed martyrs. The Congress stressed that the *Intifadah* has become the wall of resistance, resolution and turning point in the course of the conflict with the Israeli enemy, and has provided the resources for the Palestinian people to set up its independent state and preserve its national destiny from loss and waste. Hence, the Congress has taken all the resolutions that are guaranteed to provide all necessary means and potentials to escalate the *Intifadah* and guarantee its continuity by strengthening the role of the Unified National Leadership of the Uprising, and developing the popular committees, as well as mass and workers' organizations, including strike forces, and the means to secure political, material and informational support by the Arab nation and the world community.

The Congress, inspired by the principles of the Fatah Movement, and its history of struggle, and based on the principle that an organized mass movement can effect change in the end, has adopted by consensus a political platform which delineated the political stand of our Movement in the national and international spheres.

The Congress has taken all the resolutions that are guaranteed to provide all necessary means and potentials to escalate the Intifadah.

IN THE NATIONAL DOMAIN:

The Congress has examined closely the means that insure the bolstering of Palestinian national unity, and affirming that unity inside Palestine and abroad, in the diaspora, in exile, and in the steadfast refugee camps. The Congress hails the strong and constant rallying around the PLO, the leader of its struggle, and sole and legitimate representative, and its adherence to its national rights of self-determination and repatriation, and exercise of its sovereignty in its independent state of Palestine, with Jerusalem as its capital. The Congress has also affirmed the historical significance of the PNC resolutions in its 19th session, and in particular the Palestinian independence document. The Congress has authorized the Central Committee of the Fatah Movement to work in all spheres and at all levels to implement those resolutions, on the basis of achieving the national fundamental rights of the Palestinian people, and chief of which the right of repatriation, self-determination, and setting up the Palestinian state over all the Palestinian territories. The Congress, while adhering to the Palestinian peace initiative which the PNC has endorsed in its 19th session in Algiers, and which Abu Ammar [Yasser Arafat] has pronounced at the United Nations in Geneva, declares that it rejects all plans relating to autonomy, alternate states and other liquidationist schemes which aim at strengthening the occupation, such as Shamir's plan. The Congress considers the elections as something natural when the balloting is practiced in the context of an integrated and coherent plan for final and comprehensive settlement. Such elections should be carried out in a free and democratic atmosphere, and under international supervision, following Israeli troop withdrawal.

And at the time that the Congress has reasserted its compliance with the principles of international legitimacy which grants our people the right of exercising all forms of struggle, including the armed struggle, to

confront the hated Israeli occupation of our homeland, the Congress deplores all forms of terrorism, especially state terrorism, affirming the need to continue patient work for achieving a just and lasting peace, which is based on the national fundamental and inalienable rights of our people, in the context of an international conference in which all the permanent member-states of the Security Council, and all the concerned parties, including the PLO, will take part on an equal footing. The Congress has also reaffirmed the continuation of the dialogue with the Israeli democratic forces, in the framework of the principles of our national congresses.

The Congress salutes the steadfast Palestinian people in our refugee camps in Lebanon, and affirms their effective role in preserving the national and independent Palestinian resolve, and has decided to secure all forms of support for preserving the camps and preventing the conspiracies aimed at dispersing them.

The Congress has also reaffirmed the importance of continued work to achieve an Arab solidarity for supporting the Palestinian cause and the *Intifadah*, and to achieve all the other national goals. This does require intensifying the relationship with the Arab masses which is the party most concerned with achieving victory and national goals of the Palestinian people.

The Congress expresses its solidarity with Lebanon, and the need to exert all possible efforts to end its agony and preserve its sovereignty, territorial integrity and Arab character. The Conference has also reviewed the developments that have led to the end of the Iraq-Iran war and the need to establish a permanent peace between the two countries. The Congress hails the sacrifices and efforts which Iraq—people and army—has offered to defend the Eastern Gate of the Arab nation.

IN THE INTERNATIONAL SPHERE:

The Congress values the brotherly and friendly relations with the Islamic and African countries, the non-Aligned states, and the Socialist states, including the Soviet Union and China.

The Congress appreciates and hails the positive and prominent change in the positions of Western Europe, Japan, Canada, and Australia in favor of the national and fundamental rights of the Palestinian people, and which has been reflected in the invitation of Abu Ammar to visit France, and in the statement of the European Community in Madrid. The Congress appreciates the Warsaw Pact communique which calls for committing those states to the Palestinian goals and aspirations.

The Congress has reviewed the question of the Palestinian American dialogue which began a few months ago. The Congress is surprised by the extreme slowness of this dialogue and the absence of political comprehensiveness and the practical rules in this dialogue, which has led the Congress to ask the U.S. administration to clearly recognize the rights of the Palestinian people in exercising its right of self-determination and establishment of its independent state with Jerusalem as its capital, as well as taking a practical stand to preserve Palestinian human rights, whose violation was clearly underlined in the U.S. State Department report on human rights. The Congress sees fit to ask the U.S. administration to abandon its partiality toward Israel and take a neutral stand which would enable it to exercise its role as partiality cannot serve the cause of peace in the required, practical manner. Besides, the continued Israeli occupation and the brutal violation of Palestinian human rights, and the ongoing confrontation by Israel of the *Intifadah* of our heroic people and children of the stones with bullets and daily killing would not have happened without American aid to Israel in the political, economic, financial, and military spheres.

The Congress sees fit to ask the U.S. administration to abandon its partiality toward Israel and take a neutral stand which would enable it to exercise its role as partiality cannot serve the cause of peace in the required, practical manner.

ORGANIZATIONAL QUESTIONS:

The organizational issue took a large portion of the Congress's work, because the strengthening of the internal situation of any revolutionary movement, such as Fatah's, and confronting some of the negative phenomena which have accumulated during the past 10 years is considered a vital and fundamental question on the way to developing the best means to wage the political and military confrontations. The Congress has taken a number of resolutions in this domain and has incorporated many changes to the internal rules and regulations.

The Congress elected Abu Ammar, by consensus and with appreciation, as general leader of the Fatah Movement. It also decided to increase the number of Executive Committee members and those of the Revolutionary Council in order to secure a wider leadership participation. The Executive Committee shall select from among its members a politburo. In this respect, the Congress has authorized the Committee and Council to select a number of our struggling cadres from inside the Occupied Territories in its leadership committees, based on the precept that the direct participation of the cadres is important for contributing to all political developments. The Congress decided to set up the "General Council of the Movement" as a new framework, in which all cadres will represent the various movement forces to take the necessary decisions when needed.

The Fifth General Congress of the Fatah Movement extends its greetings and gratitude to Tunisia, its president, government and people, for their principles and hospitality, as the Palestinian leadership is headquartered in its territory. The Congress appreciates the efforts of President Zein Al-Abideen to solve the Palestinian problem and his decision to host the Fifth Congress. □

FOR THE RECORD

Full Text of Palestinian Memorandum to John Kelly

Editor's Note:

Prominent Palestinian nationalists from the West Bank and Gaza met with U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Near East and South Asian Affairs John Kelly, in Jerusalem, on August 3, at the U.S. Consulate General. Following is the full text of the memorandum that was handed to Mr. Kelly by the 12 Palestinians attending the meeting.

We view our meeting today, Thursday, August 3, 1989, as part of the ongoing dialogue between the U.S. administration and the PLO, which is the sole legitimate representative of all the Palestinian people inside and outside the Occupied Territories. As such, neither this meeting nor any other activity of a similar nature may be construed as constituting an alternative channel or alternative representation to the PLO, but rather a reinforcement of the legitimacy and substance of the existing official avenues and leadership.

This meeting would indeed have had greater importance and significance had it been preceded by official talks between yourself and PLO officials. In fact, the U.S.-PLO dialogue has so far demonstrated an alarming lack of progress in matters of substance and the levels of representation. In order for this dialogue to fulfill its pivotal role in the peace process, it must undergo a serious and candid reappraisal to serve the purposes of empowerment and effective achievement.

As Palestinians from occupied Palestine, we seek to convey to you in this meeting the message of the *Intifadah*—a message that is at once the rejection of and resistance to the Israeli occupation of our lands and oppression of our people, and at the same time an expression of the endeavors at social transformation and state-building as the alternative, appropriate, authentic, and legitimate response to the illegitimate and destructive Israeli occupation. In essence, the *Intifadah* is a genuine commitment to peace and the affirmation of human, moral, and democratic values.

This commitment was responsibly articulated by the Palestine National Council in its 19th session, on November 15, 1989. The Palestinian peace initiative embodies within it the principles and mechanisms essential to the achievement of a comprehensive and permanent solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and hence to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Unfortunately, the maturity, foresight, courage, and sense of historic responsibility that characterize the Palestinian commitment to peace have not met with a response of equal magnitude and daring.

It is ironic that the Palestinian peace stance which presents a unique opportunity for reconciliation and for breaking the endless cycle of violence and pain that has hitherto engulfed our region has been met with blind intransigence and entrenchment on the part of the Israeli authorities as expressed in their escalation of a brutal and punitive policy of represion and violence. Palestinian rights and lives are being blatantly violated on a daily basis as a matter of deliberate, declared, and premeditated state policy against a captive civilian population in flagrant defiance of international public opinion and all norms governing civilized behavior.

The so-called Israeli "peace initiative" is an attempt at simultaneously negating Palestinian national rights and identity, circumventing legitimate representation and leadership, and sidestepping the central issues of the conflict.

The so-called Israeli "peace initiative" is an attempt at simulataneously negating Palestinian national rights and identity, circumventing legitimate representation and leadership, and sidestepping the central issues of the conflict. As a tactical ploy to distract and deceive public opinion it has introduced tangential issues and misdirections thus confusing the means with the end and confusing the procedure with the substance. The principle of free and democratic elections is one that Palestinians value highly and to which they are whole-heartedly committed. However, the Israeli version, as alluded to in the "Israeli initiative," lacks the following indispensable components:

1. The recognition of the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people.
2. The logic of internal coherence in the form of clearly perceived and delineated transitional steps leading to a defined objective.
3. The framework of international legitimacy and quarantees.

Consequently, in its present form, it is a deconstructive exercise in verbal manipulation that violates the very principles of freedom and democracy and disqualifies itself as a serious and viable step in the peace process.

In view of the asymmetry between the Palestinian and Israeli initiatives, the role of the United States gains an even greater significance. Based on our recognition of this fact, we view with the greatest seriousness the lack of even-handedness and objectivity in the U.S. response. To redress this imbalance, the U.S. administration is called upon to demonstrate a genuine commitment to a just peace through

the following:

1. The recognition of the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people as an expression of Palestinian national rights and not just political rights.
2. The implementation of its "land for peace" policy by actively seeking an end to the Israeli occupation of the territories occupied in 1987.
3. The appreciation of the urgency for the convening of the International Conference as a venue for serious negotiations to achieve a guaranteed peace settlement.
4. The adoption of the principle of mutuality and reciprocity in all matters pertaining to the solution of the conflict, including issues of independence, sovereignty, security, recongition, national rights, and guarantees.

LIST OF PALESTINIAN SIGNATORIES OF THE MEMORANDUM

Radwan Abu Ayyash, head of the Palestinian Journalists Union
Faisal Husseini, director of the Arab Studies Society, Jerusalem
Fayez Abu Rahmeh, head of the Lawyers' Association in Gaza
Hanna Siniora, editor of *Al-Fajr* newspaper
Elias Freij, mayor of Bethlehem
Ghassan al-Khatib, lecturer at Bir Zeit University
Zahira Kamal, lecturer at the Teachers' Training Center, Ramallah
Hanan Ashrawi, lecturer at Bir Zeit University
Dr. Zakaria Agha, head of the Doctors' Union, Gaza
Sa'id Kan'an, businessman from Nablus
Ziad Abu Ziad, editor of *Gesher*, a Palestinian Hebrew-language weekly
Jamil Tarifi, lawyer from Ramallah, invited but could not attend
Moustafa Natshe, deposed mayor of Hebron

In attending this meeting today, we would like to stress the crucial and immediate role that the United States can play by actively intervening to put an end to the Israeli violations of Palestinian human and national rights. Such a move logically constitutes the first step towards creating a dynamic for peace. □

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Dr. Rashid Khalidi - Professor and Author: University of Chicago
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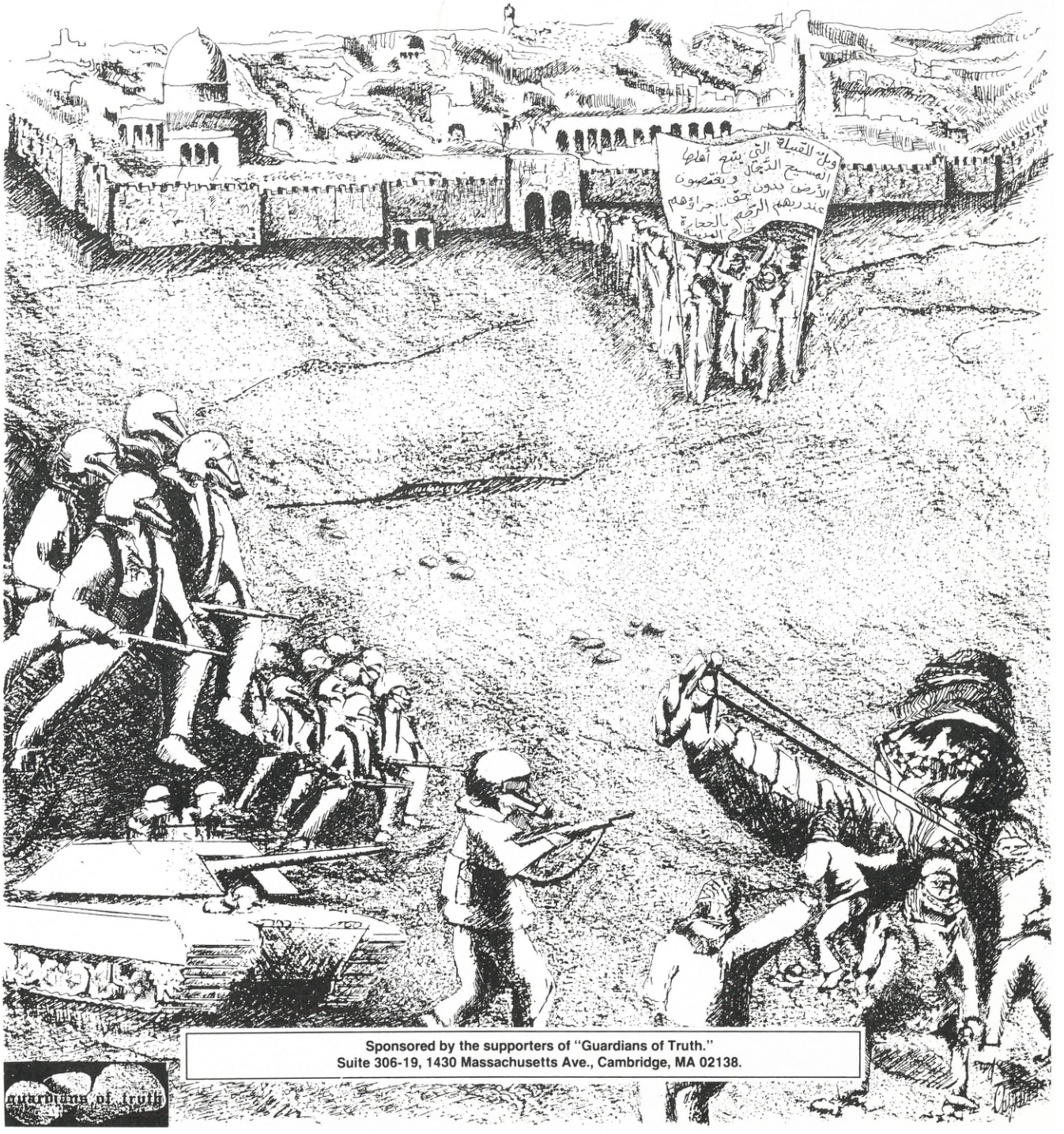

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